

THE
L O C K E T;
O R,
THE HISTORY
O F
Mr. SINGLETON.
A NOVEL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

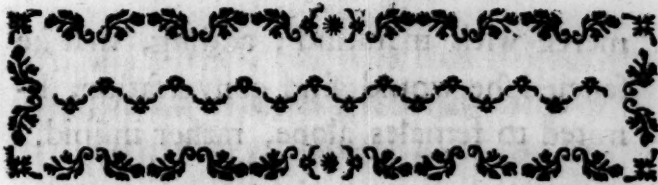
By the AUTHOR of EMILY;
O R, THE HISTORY
O f a NATURAL DAUGHTER.

V O L. II.

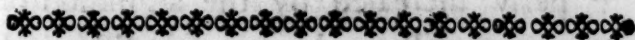
L O N D O N:

Printed for R. SNAGG, No. 29, PATER-
NOSTER-ROW.

M, DCC, LXXIV.



THE
LOCKET, &c.



IMMEDIATELY Mrs. Mal-
pas began to inveigh against
I love and all its joys. She
called it a false, delusive
passion, and protested she would, on no
terms whatever, engage a second time in
a tender connection.

Revel, laughing, asked her if she had
made a resolution to forswear all com-

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B

merce

merce with mankind ; adding, that he fancied she would find conversation, limited to females alone, rather insipid.

She replied, with vivacity, that she did not think her own sex quite so dull as he did. “ But it is not my intention, “ continued she, to debar myself of any “ innocent recreation, and I imagine “ that any such enjoyment may be properly increased by the admission of “ men to a share in my friendship : I “ am resolved, however, that all my “ connections shall be of the *Platonic* “ kind.”

Revel, who was too well acquainted with human nature and the fair sex not to know how very fallacious such a scheme must be, especially when planned by a woman of Mrs. Malpas's disposition, not only laughed within himself, but loudly, and to her face declared that

he had never yet known a single woman who could keep up to the purity of *Platonism*. “Thousands, added he, have
“been imposed upon by men pretending to have no other design in their
“attachment than to enliven disinterested friendship, have deceived them in
“the most atrocious manner. The
“good girls, indeed, continued he, sarcastically, too often contribute to
“the fatal deception by their own excessive credulity. Now whenever a
“lady, relying upon her *Platonics*, begins first, she will, in all human
“probability, be undone, and as she courts her own ruin by deceiving herself, she gives a male friend the greatest advantage imaginable over her—
“an advantage which he may very
“justly take without being tormented with any self-reproaching sensations;
“for no man can refuse a challenge

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“ from a lady ; it is a duty to follow
“ when *she* leads the way. Take care
“ of yourself, therefore, madam ; you
“ have pointed out the path so plainly
“ that I cannot possibly mistake it, and
“ if any mischief *should* happen which
“ you do not at present suspect, I beg
“ you will not blame *me*, as I have given
“ you fair warning.”

The widow laughed in her turn at Revel's declaring himself so ready for her, and dared him to do his worst.

Mrs. Malpas, indeed, at that moment did not, by any means, know what she was about. Believing, from what she had often read concerning their intimacies, that a man and a woman, like flint and steel, could not be often within contact of each other without emitting sparks of affection which might in time kindle a considerable flame ; but she was
not

not aware that the fire so kindled might consume *her* without damaging in the least her inflaming companion. In short, her whole thoughts being now bent on making sure of Revel, she left herself quite unguarded, and thinking herself perfectly safe, under the idea of indulging a *chaste friendship*, she by degrees both permitted and encouraged liberties at which a woman with a less presumptuous dependance on her own discretion would have started at. Had she been as discreet as she was daring she would have flown from her *new* friend with precipitation, and convinced him by her flight that she suspected him, not irrationally, of harbouring designs against her not absolutely *Platonic*.

Mrs. Malpas, pleased with the freedoms of the man to whom she could not feel any aversion, and hoping by her indulgence to bring him to solicit for the

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last favour in a way which would sufficiently authorize her granting it, set no bounds to her encouraging behaviour; she conducted herself in a manner too particular to pass unnoticed and too ridiculous to be defended.

However, as Mrs. Malpas and Revel had few witnesses to their *friendly interviews*, Bonfoy excepted, they were not so *reserved* in their carriage to each other as they perhaps would otherwise have been. Bonfoy being too well acquainted with his friend's principles, principles by which most of the young men of the age, and too many of the old ones are governed, not to know that it would be a difficult matter to talk him from his purpose, either by argument or persuasion, thought it best to appear blind to what he could not prevent, and to make what is called a diversion for the enemy. In order to put his new machine into
motion,

motion, he proposed a return to Singleton-hall.

Revel did not listen with any pleasure to this proposal, and indeed Bonfoy would not have thought of it but on his friend's account, as he plainly saw that he was plunging into entanglements from which he would not find it easy to disengage himself. To snatch his friend from the precipice to which he was hurrying, while his situation was not immediately dangerous, and to preserve Mrs. Malpas from the commission of an irretrievable error he sacrificed his own pleasure; gladly he would have remained at the cottage, because he was charmed with its situation, and because it was not far from Miss West; but the increasing intimacy between the above mentioned couple determined him not to remain there, and his determination certainly

B 4 resulted

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resulted from his sincere regard to them both.

Bonfoy, though he seldom saw Miss West, still hoped and expected every day to meet her somewhere, and she had indeed since her residence at the cottage paid two visits to Mrs. Malpas; yet notwithstanding the great satisfaction he received from those visits, being admitted of the party with Revel, he deemed it his duty as a friend and as a man of honour to convey his fellow-traveller, if possible from a place in which he was in the greatest danger of sullyng his own character by injuring the reputation of Mrs. Malpas. But it was not without meeting with a violent opposition from him, that he could prevail on his friend to quit a spot where he began to find more entertainment than he had expected. At length, however, he did prevail on him to depart. The lady

lady could have almost killed him for drawing away his friend just when she began to conceive hopes of making him as tender as she wished him to be ; but he carried his point.

On their arrival at the *ball* they were welcomed with the most cordial satisfaction, but Revel plainly discovered by his unusual seriousness that he wished himself somewhere else.

Singleton could not help observing it, nor could he refrain from mentioning what he had observed to Bonfoy, who took that opportunity to tell him he had, with the utmost difficulty, separated his friend from the widow who might, he thought, suffer with *him* by the continuance of their intimacy. “ Besides,” continued he, as I wished Mrs. Malpas to leave the cottage, in order to have it entirely in my own possession,

“ I hoped that she would take their
“ sudden departure as a hint for her to
“ remove herself. I was in hopes also
“ of having the pleasure of *your* com-
“ pany there, after *her* removal,”

Singleton thanked him, but made no
promise; he only said, “ I don’t believe
“ that you will find Mrs Malpas in haste
“ to leave you. I know very well that
“ when once a woman takes a fancy,
“ either to a particular person or a par-
“ ticular place, she will not quit either
“ of them in a hurry. You have acted,
“ in my opinion, very wisely in leaving
“ her *to* herself; as she cannot *by* herself
“ do any mischief—women are mis-
“ chievous creatures. I am sorry to
“ hear that Mr. Revel would have
“ thrown himself into a dangerous situ-
“ ation by a connection with this ro-
“ mantic widow, artful and designing
“ I warrant her. I hope he will now
“ reflect

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“ reflect seriously upon the consequences
“ to be expected from such a connection
“ before it is too late.

“ Such a connection, sir, said Bonfoy,
“ is often attended with consequences
“ fatal to both the parties concerned in
“ it. A man of honour should consider
“ thoroughly the nature of his engage-
“ ments with a woman, before he enters
“ into them; he certainly should not,
“ under the mask of affection, reduce
“ her to a condition which, if he really
“ loves her, must necessarily make him,
“ as well as her, inexpressibly miserable.”

“ Most unquestionably he should not,
“ replied Singleton, with a sigh which
“ he strove in vain to suppress; yet such
“ is the astonishing power of the passions
“ when people are in the *hey-day* of
“ their blood, that every virtue is
“ swept away before them;—not only
“ the

“ the thoughtless but the reflecting are
“ carried down the torrents of desire.
“ However, we cannot blame the
“ cruelty of those women who reject
“ our offers, slight our addresses, and
“ refuse to listen to our complaints, as
“ we are, in the end, more obliged to
“ them than we can possibly conceive,
“ for they, by their rejections, slights,
“ and refusals, greatly assist us, by
“ saving us from the commission of
“ follies which often hurry us to cri-
“ minal actions, severely to be repented
“ of to the last moment of our ex-
“ istence.”

Singleton uttered this speech with great energy, and appeared to labour under violent emotions during the delivery of it. Bonfoy was now convinced that the cruelty of some female, whom he had fondly loved, and whom he still admired, had occasioned the striking singularity

singularity in his behaviour, and that he strove to reconcile himself to the cruel treatment he had received by supposing that the kindness of the idol of his heart might have been attended with even worse consequences. Pitying, therefore, this derangement of his ideas, while he esteemed him for his many apparent good qualities, he again expressed his concern for Revel, and again wished he could be cured of this growing *penchant* for Mrs. Malpas.

Singleton replied, " Absence is, in
 " my opinion, more likely than any
 " thing to bring about the wished for
 " cure. I would advise you to keep
 " him from returning to the cottage, if
 " possible. There is no trusting a man
 " a moment with a woman, she will
 " most assuredly do him a mischief if
 " she can,"

While

While Bonfoy was thus endeavouring to draw Revel from an attachment which he thought extremely dangerous, he was really making himself uneasy with very little reason, as his friend thought very little about Mrs. Malpas. Had she not been thrown in his way a second time he most probably would have quite forgotten her. His notice of her was in consequence of her being the only woman just then at hand, and even that accidental consideration would not have deeply engaged his attention if she had not, with an indefatigable assiduity, strove to fix him irrevocably hers.

Revel had not yet discovered any inclination for matrimony; he had never indeed liked any woman well enough to think of marrying her, neither did he approve of taking a woman into regular keeping; having seen among his acquaintance a numerous train of ill consequences

sequences arising from these temporary connections. Still less could he bear to adopt the mode of proceeding by which many young fellows of the present age licentiously distinguish themselves; he could not think of seducing married women from their conjugal duties. What then was to be done? He was in the bloom and vigour of life, and his relish for pleasure was at its height—There was but one way left for him, and he had recourse to it. When he met with a woman as amorous as himself, in no shape disagreeable, and shackled by no restraints, he imagined that he should be guilty of no flagrant act of imprudence by encouraging *her* to comply with *his* wishes and her own.

Revel was the more strongly excited to trifle with Mrs. Malpas, (as he called it) because she was, in his opinion, silly enough to suppose it was possible for her

her to keep up a *Platonic friendship* with him. This supposition of hers, which had been destructive to many of her sex, appeared to him so very reprehensible that he could not help thinking she deserved to be punished for her presumption, and to be made sensible of her folly by suffering for it.

Bonfoy's sentiments upon this occasion were different from those of his friend; he looked upon things in another light -- he thought that no woman, let her be ever so ridiculous, ought to be encouraged to run headlong to her own ruin; and that the man who could take advantage of her weaknesses, merited the severest correction. These generous sentiments he often vented before Revel, in hopes of finding them make some impression upon his mind, in hopes of deterring him from the increase of an intimacy with Mrs. Malpas, which could not be productive

productive of disagreeable consequences to them both. Singleton was frequently present when Bonfoy talked in the above strain, and became every day more and more pleased with the excellence of his heart, and the propriety of his conduct, arising from the soundness of his understanding. Frequently too did he declare, to the no small joy of Mrs. Grace, that he had not before met with a man so deserving of his highest esteem as Bonfoy. Such declarations, as they contained the sincerest encomiums on her favourite, made her daily desirous of an alliance with a man of so exemplary a character; and had she not been often checked by her brother's violent invectives against marriage, and the abominable indecencies women were guilty of, by thinking of young fellows, she would certainly have made more frequent attacks upon Bonfoy, who, though he could not avoid seeing her weakness,

always

always appeared blind to it, and behaved to her with the greatest respect. He spent, indeed, almost all the time he was at the *ball*, either with *her* or with her brother.

Singleton, whose regard for Bonfoy daily increased, admitted him often to his library. This was a favour which he had not conferred on any body before, and Bonfoy felt no small pleasure to find himself rising in the good justice's esteem, as he earnestly wished to know the cause of his particular dislike to women: not from an impertinent curiosity, but from a desire to assist him in the removal of it, thinking that it exposed him to a great deal of unmerited ridicule, and not seldom to insults, from which his friends, while they were pained on his account, could not shield him, as he seemed to bring them upon himself.

self. His particularities, indeed, were of such a nature, as to attract every body's attention; and when once a man lives or behaves in a way different from the world, when he is *singular* in any respect, he is posted for an odd fellow, a humourist, and is liable to numberless affronts, especially from those, who dreading the censures or the sneers of the millions, dares not live as he likes, dares not act, dares hardly think for himself.

Singleton, having met with many affronts and insults, in consequence of his uncommon modes of thinking and acting, from which not all his uncommon virtues, and amiable qualities, were sufficient to secure him, had been extremely disgusted with society, and had declined, as much as possible, for several years, mixing with strangers. When he found Bonfoy, however, much
of

of the same temper with himself, when he found that he never diverted himself with his follies, but rather appeared not to observe him, he felt a sort of an affection for him; he was never so pleased as when Bonfoy was with him, and had fully intended to have staid some days at the cottage, before he heard that Mrs. Malpas discovered no inclination to leave it. As he could not bring himself, therefore, to accompany Bonfoy to his cottage, he wished to keep him at the *ball*; and had it been consistent with his plan, Bonfoy would have remained there with the greatest pleasure; but having determined to live in such a manner as to increase rather than diminish his fortune, he did not chuse to be under too many obligations to any person. The plan of retirement, which he formed, was in his own opinion, the most eligible one he could have thought of, and it was entirely in search of a
situation

situation proper for his purpose, that he came so far from the metropolis.

Revel, though very ready to accompany his friend to any part of the kingdom, would fain have dissuaded him from what he called—burying himself alive; but all his arguments were not forcible enough to make him change his mind with regard to retiring from the world.

Not being of so contemplative a turn as his friend Bonfoy was; but eager to enjoy every pleasure which came in his way—(and if they did not come of themselves, he generally went in search of them) Revel—who had met with nothing new since his return from the cottage, set out one morning after breakfast, from the hall, upon a ramble towards the next village.

In

In his way to that village, he met a groupe of figures which he had not expected to see in that part of the country: two ladies and two gentlemen, the latter were dressed in the true *macaroni* style; the former, leaning on their arms, made a different appearance; very different from that of any of the ladies within several miles of them: they were in sacks of Irish muslin tucked up pretty high over large short hoops: on their backs—for their necks were quite bare, they had very small cloaks, buttoned upon the arms. On their heads they wore transparent gauze bonnets, which looked like Strawberry-baskets inverted: in their hands they had slender sticks made to resemble *crooks*, in order to give them a *pastoral* appearance; and the ladies themselves were not unlike those nymphs who sometimes decorate the side-scene of an opera. The uncommon covering of their heads,
alone

alone, disqualified them from being ornamental in such a situation, as their hair was curled &c. *au dernier gout*; they were, in short, in every respect, like women perfectly acquainted with the *manners* and *manœuvres* of a theatre, and for that very reason had been selected by their companions, being the most extravagant and insatiable personages of their profession: setting aside those qualifications, they had but little to recommend them: of beauty they had a very small share; in wit they were totally deficient; but they were lively to an excess, and much addicted to that sort of humour which depends more upon the agility of the body, than the activity of the mind. They were extremely fond of *personal* jokes, and had learnt to burst into the most violent fits of laughter, at the very time when they were far from being diverted;
and

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and

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and they almost perpetually *smiled*—though their smiles were by no means becoming, in order to shew their teeth, sufficiently white, indeed, but not all their own; having had several vacancies filled up with an ivory detachment from the mercenary jaws of chimney-sweepers and brick-dust girls. The admirers of these ladies, however, little suspected them of having been so much obliged to their *dentist*. Revel, happened to know them both, having been accustomed to the *best company in town*.

After a mutual exchange of common civilities and mutual expressions of surprise, Mr. *Puffer*, who was the son of a popular auctioneer, that acquired a fortune sufficient to enable him to retire from business, and to copy the vices and follies of a peer, told Revel that the town was so d—d empty, that anything

thing of a gentleman was ashamed to shew his head there, and that they had taken a ready furnished house for six weeks or two months in the neighbourhood of the place where he met them.

Mr. Suds, the son of a barber, added,
 “ We wanted a little fresh air, and
 “ therefore left the stinking town, and
 “ come here to purify ourselves a bit.
 “ There is nothing so detestable as fœ-
 “ tid smells, which in hot weather are
 “ insupportable in London: for though
 “ nobody of any fashion lives near any
 “ of your dirty mechanics, yet in going
 “ from one place to another it is im-
 “ possible totally to avoid passing by
 “ those shops, which almost poison peo-
 “ ple with their cursed stench.”

“ Well, for *my* part,” said the lady
 who had hold of his arm, “ I am ne-
 “ ver disturbed with smells, as I always
 Vol. II. C “ have

have a quantity of *Eau sans Pareille* about me; for I hate your odious country air. People talk of the fragrance of roses and new-moon hay—faugh! the first ever puts me in mind of an apothecary's shop, and the last of the stinks of a stable.

Revel looking earnestly at her, said, that those who had the nicest noses had not found them offended with the most delicious odours which nature has so profusely scattered for our refreshment, and which are superior to all the scents produced by art.

“ You was always a great admirer of
 “ nature, we know Revel, said Mr.
 “ Puffer, and so am I when she produces
 “ a fine woman—But prythee, what
 “ schemes are you upon in this part of
 “ the world? a pleasurable one I dare
 “ swear.”

Revel

Revel then told him that he and Bonfoy where at the house of Mr. Singleton in the neighbourhood.

“What? are you with that strange
“fellow who cannot bear the sight of a
“woman?”

“Lord! (cried one of the ladies) Is
“it possible there can exist such a crea-
“ture?”

“You did well to call him only a
“creature, (replied the other) I am
“sure he cannot be a man.”

“A good hint, upon my soul, (said
“Revel) let me perish if I believe he is:
“it is the consciousness of his *defects*
“which puts him out of humour, and
“in order to conceal *them*, he pretends
“to hate the whole sex, and he feigns

“to hate them because he is not capable
“of enjoying them.”

A loud laugh from the two ladies, the shouts of their companions, and the applause which they all bestowed on him for his *lucky thought*—as they called it, gave Revel no small pleasure; he only wondered that it never came into his head before—as it *had* entered into it, he was determined to make the most of it, and to raise some mirth from it with the assistance of his new companions, the properest imaginable, to carry any kind of frolicks into execution in the most spirited manner. All ready to proceed to business, they were only puzzled how to get Singleton among them. The management of this affair required no small address.

Revel, after having gone home with the abovementioned friends to humour,
and

and sat with them a little while, returned to the hall—he then began to consider what method he should take to bring the justice and the nymphs together, by accident, being well assured that all the intreaties in the world could not prevail on Singleton to see them upon any other terms—how to contrive a meeting between them he was utterly at a loss.

While they were walking in the garden, bathing and swimming happened to be mentioned. Singleton said, that the latter was both useful and manly exercise, but at the same time confessed that he never had the very necessary courage to attempt to swim, and did not believe he should succeed, as he could never bring himself to go into the water.

C 3

“No?”

“No! (said Revel) that’s something
“odd; but I think these aversions and
“terrors may be got over—you must
“inure yourself by degrees to the water.
“I can swim tolerably, and if you please
“I will shew you how I first learnt.”

Singleton assented, but without thinking any more about it.

The next day Revel went to his acquaintance from London, told the women they might now have an excellent opportunity to know what Singleton was made of, as he would bring him to the side of a little purling stream, on the other side of a few private fields, which was concealed from the view of passengers by a hedge. “If you will come
“to that place (continued he) you may
“see what this singular animal really
“is.”

“We

“ We will do more, (replied they) we
 “ will try him to the utmost.” “ All
 “ such monsters in nature (said one of
 “ the ladies) should be ridiculed and
 “ exposed.”

“ Certainly, (said the other) and made
 “ to suffer for what they cannot do.”—
 “ That’s very hard, indeed, (said Revel)
 “ —No, that ought not to be neither,
 “ Singleton is a very honest fellow, and
 “ has, I believe, one of the best hearts
 “ in the world. There is nothing but
 “ this foolish affectation I wish to cure
 “ him of; he would then be an honour
 “ to society; instead of being a *butt*,
 “ from his pretended antipathy to wo-
 “ men: an antipathy so exceeding un-
 “ natural, that it certainly must arise
 “ from a very uncommon cause.”

In consequence of this conversation, a plan so laid by these ladies of easy virtue to expose Singleton: not once recollecting that they could not render *him* ridiculous without making themselves so at the same time. Accordingly dresses were prepared, resembling those in which the sea-nymphs make their appearance at the play-house.

In their new dresses Miss Skelter and Mrs. Swinney went down to the side of the little brook, and waited there behind the hedge till Revel brought Singleton.

As soon as Singleton arrived, Revel prevailed on him to undress, and plunge into the water. Just as he was preparing to follow him in jumped the women.

A loud

A loud shriek from the justice actually frightened them, and they scrambled ashore as fast as possible. Singleton, in his hurry, not only splashed them all over, but wetted their cloaths, and Revel's, in such a manner, that they could not think of putting them on: nor were his own, indeed, in a much drier condition; however, he was so ashamed, and so fearful of their coming too near him, that he threw his own cloathes on, wet as they were, and left Revel to return home how he could, naked or drest.

When he got home, he found himself so much disconcerted and disappointed, that he would not be seen the rest of the day; he was, indeed, very much disordered, by having been so long wet after he came out of the water, and inclined to be feverish, and the agitation of his mind did not make him better.

While Singleton was in this situation, Revel and the women were making themselves very merry at *his* expence: the latter both declared that there was not the least reason for his flying with such precipitation from their sex, as far as they could see.

This speech in favour of Singleton's virility, produced a conversation exceedingly diverting: diverting to the parties concerned, though it would not perhaps, have been entertaining to any other persons: It was finished with another plot upon the justice, but their new design could not be carried into execution till he had thoroughly recovered from his last fright and its effects.

Singleton soon recovered, and had the satisfaction to hear Revel join with him in exclaiming against the assurance of *some* women, who, though half-dressed themselves,

themselves, had the impudence to jump into the water to him, when he was quite without any cloaths at all—"But women are come to such a pitch, (continued he) that there is no wonder—ing at any thing they do; they will come to bed to me soon, I suppose"—

Here he stopped—his features were frightfully distorted—he stamped with his foot, rolled his forehead, and then went on—"But why do I talk thus? Am not I also to blame? Did not I —let me not think of it—let it be forever blotted from my memory—I *must* —I *will* forget it"—

Here he again was silent, pensive and reserved.

Revel then resumed the subject, but he received no answer to what he advanced.

vanced about it. Singleton apparently endeavoured to stifle emotions which were very troublesome to him.

While Revel was contriving a scheme for the creation of emotions still more uneasy to him, the women, who had from the short time they had seen him, found more in him than they might have discovered in any other state, were quite satisfied with his appearance, though they were not pleased with his precipitate retreat from them. As they were exceedingly diverted with what had passed, they wished to have a little more of it, looking upon him as the strangest character they had ever met, and entirely fit for the promotion of their mirth. In consequence of their beholding him in this convenient light, they schemed his being conveyed to their house in a state of insensibility, and in no condition to make any resistance.

But

But as they knew not how to conduct this *manœuvre* by themselves, they had a long consultation with Revel—several plans were proposed and rejected: not one had a promising appearance. Revel with his head full of the new project for the embarrassment of Singleton, endeavoured to get more and more into his favour, and succeeded.

Singleton, though a lover of exercise sometimes from the fickleness of his temper, declined making so much use of his legs as he ought; he therefore, after having aired himself several days on horseback, and in his carriage, found himself fatigued when he made his own feet carry him from place to place.

Revel, in order to turn his exercise in the *latter way* to his advantage, accompanied him in his walks, and, one day
led

led him to the house which Puffer and his friends had taken.

Just as they had passed it, Revel complained of being hot and dry. Singleton, who was really in the same condition, joined in wishing to be able to get a glass of any thing to drink, though it was but fair water.

Revel replied, that water was very improper for him as he was hot, and that he would go back, and ask for something better at the house near them and bring it to him.

Singleton readily consented, as he thought he might by such a proceeding, procure some refreshment, which he very much wanted, without being seen or noticed.

Revel,

Revel, after having made a short stay, brought out a mug of ale, telling his companion, that it was most excellent—
“ But as we are both hot and weary, added
“ he, had we not better accept of the
“ servant’s offer, who appears to be a
“ civil fellow, and sit down to rest our-
“ selves in the house, as none of the
“ family are at home.”

With this proposal Singleton refused to comply, at first, but being over-ruled by Revel, who said he wanted some fruit, which the man told him he might have if he would step into the garden, as his master was abroad.

Singleton, at length complied, and was drawn from place to place in order to look at the curiosities in the garden, till he became quite drowsy : so drowsy indeed, that he could not hold up his
head

head any longer. Sitting down, therefore, upon one of the *seats*, he fell asleep. On opening his eyes, he, to his great astonishment, found himself in bed with a very fine woman, who, throwing her arms about his neck, began to caress him with a tenderness which might have been very agreeable to any other man: to *him* it was exceedingly alarming.

Starting from her, he was going to jump out of bed with all possible precipitation. She again seized him, and exerting all her force, vowed he should not leave her. He struggled hard, as he really had to do with a woman of uncommon strength, who, clinging about his neck, maintained her post till they both fell to the ground.

A violent peal of laughter immediately issued from an inner room; and
fo

soon afterwards Puffer, Froth, Mrs. Swinney, Miss Skelter, and several of their friends appeared, who had assembled together on purpose to divert themselves with Singleton's confusion.

Singleton finding that some trick had been played with him, began to grow very angry, and called upon Revel, but *he*, though he was accessary to all his embarrassments, kept out of his sight.

The justice's bedfellow, not quite without cloaths, though very loosely dressed, still clung about him, making use of a number of fond expressions. Springing from her a second time, and snatching a stick from one of the company, he declared that he would knock down any person who ventured to stop him. The figure which he made (having nothing on but his shirt) with his
hair

hair flowing about his ears, and the strongest marks of anger and confusion in his countenance, while he vented the bitterest execrations against the female part of the company, rendered the scene truly comic, to the merriment of which, the sneers, *double entendres*, and affected witticisms, added to the fulsome fondness of his fair companion, not a little contributed. He was, at last, indeed, almost mad. He ran round the room to find a way out, but in vain; the doors were all locked; he could not by any means escape from his *inamorata*, who closely pursued him. At length, lifting up his cane, he swore that women were greater plagues than all the devils in hell, and that the scandalous looseness of their behaviour deserved the severest correction; then, throwing off his *tornments*, he swore that if she came near him again, he would be the death of her. On the delivery of this furious speech, she

she reproached him for his cruelty, while the rest of the company drolled upon his insufficiency. “ No man, they said, “ who was not as cold as a piece of ice, “ could possibly, without a total inability, resist so powerful a temptation.”

This satirical address was in the highest degree punishing, and it roused him in such a manner, that he levelled a blow at his Dulcinea, which might have not only totally prevented her from acting the *Amorosa* again, but have put a period to her existence, had he not been stopped by Puffer, who, seizing his weapon, asked him, how he could behave so meanly as to attempt the murder of a woman, and so pretty a woman too.

“ I would not willingly murder any
 “ human creature (replied he) beginning
 “ to look, and speak more calmly, but
 “ then I will not take an insult from any
 “ body,

“ body, especially when I have done no-
 “ thing to deserve it, by designedly
 “ giving offence. As I have not so acted,
 “ I will not bear this treatment ; and
 “ all here who have had any hand in it,
 “ may be certain of my resenting it in
 “ a proper way.”

“ And so because you have got drunk,
 “ (said Puffer) and exposed yourself, by
 “ associating with a girl, with whom I
 “ suppose you are very well acquainted,
 “ you would now appear to know no-
 “ thing about her—You expect to have
 “ no notice taken of your connection ?
 “ but, Sir—whatever you may think of
 “ your behaviour, it is too scandalous to
 “ be passed over—your character as a
 “ man and a magistrate is stained by it,
 “ and you ought to be made thoroughly
 “ ashamed of your conduct.”

“ You

“ You ought to be made thoroughly
 “ ashamed of the falsehoods you have
 “ asserted, (replied Singleton) and shall
 “ suffer for them as soon as I have it
 “ in my power.”

Revel, who heard all that passed, now began to think the jest had been carried too far, and desired that Singleton might be left to himself. They at last agreed to take no more notice of him, but at the same time said they must quit the place, as *he* would take more notice of *them* than they chose. Accordingly, they decamped immediately.

Revel turned back to the *hall* to be at home before the irritated justice; not knowing, however, in what manner to apologize for leaving him—He wished

—too

—too late—that he had not connived at a treatment which was, he plainly saw, not to be defended.

As soon as he returned, Bonfoy asked him where he had left Singleton: a very natural question.

Revel replied, with an embarrassed air, that he hardly knew—after a little hesitation, he added—“ Singleton and I
“ being hot and thirsty with our walk,
“ drank some ale at a house in the way:
“ he fell asleep, and there I left him.”

Bonfoy made no answer, but thought that there was something very serious in his friend's speech which wanted an explanation. In a short time afterwards Singleton came in, and asked Revel what he meant by exposing him to the insults he had received.

Revel,

Revel, who well knew the justness of the charge, changed countenance, but being determined to brave it out, replied, rather coolly, "I do not know what you mean, Sir, I was equally exposed to insults myself; and had I not run for it, I might have been served in the way *you* was."

Singleton replied—"Had you given me the least hint of the characters of the people among whom I fell, I would have removed myself from them: you deceived me, and drew me in to the mischief, by making me believe that the family were not at home."

Revel's answer to this accusation was so evasive, and delivered with so much embarrassment, that it created suspicions in Bonfoy not very favourable to him:

him : it made him imagine that some trick had been played with Singleton. As soon, therefore, as he found himself alone with Revel, he began to inveigh against those who had taken such unwarrantable liberties with their friend ; adding, “ that if *he* had been present, no man should have dared to insult Mr. Singleton.”

“ But how would you prevent a woman’s making free with you.” (said Revel)

“ There are methods, (replied Bonfoy, very gravely) to make most people behave with propriety ; and surely such methods can never be better adopted than in the cause of an injured friend. Singleton has well-deserved the name of friend from *us*, by the hospitality with which he has entertained us, and it plainly appears
“ to

“to me that he has been injured by the
 “freedoms which have been taken with
 “him: freedoms which *you* ought not
 “on any account to have connived at,
 “or permitted.”

Revel fired at this reproving speech;
 he could not bear to be told of his
 having done wrong, though his con-
 science more severely reproached him
 than the accusation of his friend, and he
 returned an answer which drew another
 from him still more sharp. *His* reply to
 that was full of additional acrimony.
 Bonfoy then, with an increased warmth
 in his utterance, said—“After the num-
 “berless civilities received from Mr.
 “Singleton, it was beyond expression
 “mean, unmanly—nay, villainous to
 “treat him so—by not rescuing him
 “from those wretches into whose hands
 “he had fallen, you proved yourself

“equally culpable with *them*, and therefore deserve no favour.”

Revel now more irritated than he had yet been, desired Bonfoy to tell him what right he had to decide in such a cause, and to sit in judgment upon *him*—adding, rather fiercely—“I neither ask your opinion, nor want it.”

“You are certainly (replied he) at liberty, to say what you please, but when you act in opposition to humanity, you are as certainly deserving of censure: you merit indeed the severest chastisement.”

This was too much—Revel, who had already borne more than he had been accustomed to endure, because his conscience forced him to feel himself unpardonably in the wrong, now found it extremely difficult to bear the most insulting language

language he had, in his own opinion, ever received—" In whatever light, (replied he) in a steady tone, you consider my conduct with regard to Mr. Singleton, I cannot but look upon it as defensible, since I have ever very cautiously avoided giving him any reason to complain of my behaviour—I only connived at the treatment which you have undertaken to blame with so much bitterness, in order to render Mr. Singleton sufficiently sensible of his folly to make a change in his carriage, which, as it apparently borders upon insanity, exposes him to all kinds of affronts from people who are not acquainted with the nature of his disorder. As I can prove, therefore, that my design, on Mr. Singleton's account, was really a laudable one, I will not be corrected by Mr. Bonfoy, for having carried it into execution,

“nor will I have any aspersions levelled
“at my character.”

Bonfoy, heated by this answer, delivered with a haughtiness highly provoking, told Revel, “that whoever
“treated him with an improper freedom, should be corrected by him.”

“I am not, (said Revel) with contemptuous accents, to be threatened by a mere boy.”

These last words, tauntingly delivered, roused all the fire in Bonfoy’s soul, and he, in the keenest language upbraided Revel for his ungrateful and inhuman behaviour to Singleton, who had treated *him* with the frankness and sincerity of a friend, of a brother; and enlarged so copiously upon the nature of his offence, so zealously on the amiable character of
their

their common friend, that he, at last, bereft of all patience, told him, plainly, he *lied*.

Whetted by the last exasperating word, Bonfoy could contain himself no longer. He returned the affront in the same style.

Revel now almost foamed with passion: he strove, but in vain, to smother his resentment, while he informed Bonfoy that he had never taken the lie from any man, and that it, therefore, could not be expected he should take it from a mere boy, who was ignorant enough to suppose he might interfere in *his* affairs with impunity.

Bonfoy, inflamed by so assuming a behaviour, replied with spirit—"How-
"ever young I may *appear* to be, I
"hope I shall always have sufficient
D 3 "judgment

“ judgment and strength to take the
“ part of the injured, and to defend
“ them both from the false accusations,
“ and cowardly attacks of the *imper-*
“ *tinent* and the *insolent*, even at the
“ hazard of my life.”

“ And I, replied Revel, fiercely, will
“ hazard *mine*, this moment, in defence
“ of my character and conduct, when
“ and where you please.”

A challenge so abruptly, and at the same time so forcibly given, given in a tone which seemed to render a compliance with it inevitable, startled Bonfoy not a little. He did not want courage, but he was too religious—[The character is not often met with in this free and easy age]—as well as humane, not to shudder at the thoughts of murdering a fellow creature—particularly the man whom he called his friend.—

This

This consideration made him disposed to treat the affair in a more calm manner than he would otherwise have done. He, accordingly, told Revel that the attempt to retrieve one error by the commission of another still less to be defended, was but a poor way of acting; and added, that if he would assure him he had no ill intentions while he winked at the imprudent attacks upon Singleton: if he would promise him that he only intended to frighten him out of those singularities and antipathies which prevented his virtues from appearing in their full lustre, he was very ready to excuse what had happened, and to bury it in oblivion.

“Really,” said Revel, casting a very contemptuous look at him——“And pray, Mr. Bonfoy, who gave you the power to order and direct what should or should not be said or done

“to Mr. Singleton? I should be glad
“to be informed, Sir, by what *au-*
“*thority*—laying a strong emphasis on
“that word — you presume to direct
“*me*: even your advice, I now as
“heartily despise, as I do the person
“who has offered it. I see through
“your flimsy evasions—You cannot,
“with all your mighty wisdom, think
“of a way to prevent your meeting
“me, as one man ought to meet an-
“other, and give me a fair opportu-
“nity to defend myself against any
“farther injuries from you, but by
“this pretended moderation and love
“of justice. You would have me be-
“lieve that you are really the charac-
“ter you assume: I shall not, however,
“be any longer deceived by you, nor
“suffer you to escape the correction
“which you have so long merited,
“and which will only fall the heavier
“upon

“upon you, by having endeavoured
 “to avoid it in the most cowardly
 “manner.”

The sting in the conclusion of this speech was sufficient to have irritated a much milder, a much better man than Bonfoy, who could have put up with almost any affront from his friend, but to be charged with paying too great an attention to his personal safety—to be accused of cowardice—*that* accusation galled him severely—He could not brook it, and therefore desired his accuser to name his time and place, assuring him that he would, by his personal appearance, convince him that he had not, in the smallest degree, merited the treatment he had received from him on Singleton's account.

Revel, catching at this declaration, told him that he would instantly at-

tend him in the meadow, at the end of the grove, with pistols.

There was now no leisure for reflection; hardly any for a reply — Revel left the room directly in order to prepare the instruments of revenge and destruction.

Bonfoy retired only a moment to write three or four words on a piece of paper. Having sealed the paper, and left it upon the table in his apartment, he walked hastily towards the field of battle, lest his adversary, waiting for him, might accuse him with some appearance of truth, of being anxious to preserve his life from a want of courage. By facing his friend, indeed, in a hostile manner, he acted against his sentiments with regard to duelling, the absurdity and criminality of which he plainly saw with the
eyes

eyes of a moral and a religious man; but to have his courage questioned—there he found himself unable to act, especially to his principles, and he hurried to the appointed spot, to prove himself no coward.

When the distance was settled between them, they both presented their pistols.

Bonfoy insisted upon Revel's firing first. He did, and his adversary fell.

Revel, as soon as he saw his antagonist upon the ground, ran and raised him in his arms, struck with the deepest remorse; but the concern which he felt added to the weight of his wounded friend, would have entirely prevented his supporting him, had not some labouring men who were at work not far off, came to his relief. By them Bon-
foy

foy was carried to the *ball*, to which place Revel advanced hurrying before them, calling loudly for assistance, and execrating himself for having been his murderer.

By these proceedings Revel soon brought Singleton, Mrs. Grace, and all the family about him.

When the good justice, and his worthy sister beheld Bonfoy borne along like a corpse, their surprize and concern were inexpressible. The former hastily dispatched a servant for a surgeon: the latter hurried, with her eyes full of tears, to his apartment, to see the bed prepared: for as he still breathed, they thought he would be most at his ease there.

Revel followed his almost lifeless friend to his apartment in a very melancholy

lancholy condition. The first thing he saw there was a note sealed up on his table, addressed to himself. Opening it immediately, he found it contained his last will. Bonfoy requested his friend to accept of what little fortune he had, and to be assured that though he lifted up his hand against him, he was sincerely grieved for the occasion: that he would not bear the imputation of cowardice, especially as he felt himself strongly urged both by gratitude and esteem, to take the part of a man, who had, with all his exceptionable singularities, behaved in a most friendly manner to them both; and that he hoped, if he survived him, he would not either actively, or by connivance, give so amiable, so generous a man, the least reason to be offended with his future conduct on his account.

This

This was the purport of the note. Revel could hardly read it so much as he affected by it: so much was he afflicted at having destroyed the man whom he had ever esteemed, and truly loved: the man who had ever wished, but vainly strove to make him sensible of those errors by which he rendered himself unworthy of his friendship; and which had driven him, at last, to become his murderer.

Singleton, almost as much afflicted as Revel, groaned aloud, and lamented Bonfoy more as if he had been a brother than one whom he had so lately known; adding, that aggravating as the circumstances of his treatment were, he would endure *them*, and worse yet, rather than lose so excellent a young man.

Mrs.

Mrs. Grace, weeping, declared, that a more worthy, innocent young fellow was never born, and that it had been better that Revel had died instead of killing him.

To this assertion Revel most cordially subscribed, and lamented his lost friend in the most pathetic language.

The arrival of the surgeon increased the hopes and fears of them all.

After having probed the wound in the left rib, he declared, to the great satisfaction of Mr. Singleton, Mrs. Grace, and even Revel himself, who stood trembling, expecting a sentence of death—that Mr. Bonfoy might with care recover.

It is not easy, indeed, to describe the instantaneous change which this
infor-

information produced in the faces, and whole behaviour of the above-mentioned *Trio*. Mr. Singleton's countenance was remarkably affected by it: it was flushed with joy; with that also his eyes sparkled, believing Bonfoy to be the best young man, and not yet knowing that he had endangered his life by taking *his* part.

Revel's features strongly expressed the feelings by which he was at that moment agitated: his heart bounded with delight on finding that his rashness and ill-timed pride had not proved fatal to his friend.—Yet, in the midst of his joy upon the animating occasion, he, from the consciousness of having deservedly brought all the anxiety he had endured upon himself, he received a considerable check to it, and by that consciousness was prevented from being

ing so completely satisfied as he would otherwise have been.

Mrs. Grace was almost dissolved in tears of pleasure.

The wounded man himself was, indeed, the only person tranquil and composed. — He felt his mind very much at ease, and undisturbed by the reproaches of conscience; he would have been perfectly so, had he not, in consequence of the pain he felt, while confined to his bed, considered, that his *friend*, in compliance with a barbarous and impious custom, might have been reduced to the situation he was then in. He, therefore, began to look upon duelling in a worse light than he had ever yet done, and more than ever blamed himself for having so readily given way to a fit of pride and resentment, which might have terminated with

with the loss of life to one of the parties, with unspeakable misery to the survivor. — Yet as he saw Revel safe and affectionately attached to him, he became every hour more tranquil; and his composure greatly forwarded his recovery: but his health was accelerated by the messages he received from Mr. and Miss West; who sent frequently to enquire about his health, after the news of the duel being spread round the country. Mr. West thought himself bound in gratitude to express the concern he felt for the *preserver* of his daughter at the time of the *fire*, and *her* gratitude upon the occasion was not less lively.”

The concern which Mr. and Miss West discovered for Bonfoy's unfortunate situation, gave him the sincerest satisfaction: as he imagined that the concern of the *latter* might arise from emotions

emotions of a more tender nature than those excited by mere gratitude, he felt the most pleasing sensations, and they were greatly conducive to the re-establishment of his health.

Revel, in order to make Singleton and Bonfoy some amends for the injury he had done them, confessed to the *former* the mean part he had acted in conniving at the scandalous treatment received by him from Puffer and his set, not concealing the generous behaviour of the latter, which had obliged him to risque his life in the defence of his opinion with regard to the baseness of the treatment his hospitable friend had met with.

This confession gained Revel the pardon he wished for from Singleton: it so endeared Bonfoy to *him* and to Mrs. Grace, that they knew not—particularly

ricularly the latter—how to part with him. The affection of Mrs. Grace was, indeed, raised to such a pitch, that Bonfoy began to be apprehensive of very disagreeable consequences: consequences not to be avoided but by his removing himself to a greater distance from her. The agreeableness of his person, added to his courage, humanity, and sensibility, had so heightened the flame added by him in that lady's bosom, that she could not, without the greatest difficulty, keep it within the bounds her brother had prescribed to her.

Bonfoy, therefore, influenced by these apprehensions, as soon as he was able to leave his room, proposed to return to the cottage: some alterations he really intended to make there; and he thought it quite necessary to have them finished before the end of the summer,

while

while the days were long, and the weather was favourable.

These considerations had their due weight with Singleton; but though Bonfoy plainly proved it was for his advantage to return home, he parted from him with a reluctance not to be concealed: loth, however, as Singleton was to part with his young friend, he could on no account be persuaded to accompany him (he promised to come to him in a short time) not chusing to encounter Mrs. Malpas.—“ I am resolved to keep clear of *women*, said he, for the rest of my days.”

Revel and Bonfoy, therefore, arrived at the cottage by themselves: and they were received by Mrs. Malpas with the sincerest demonstration of joy.

The

The next morning they had the pleasure of a visitor whom they little expected.

This visitor was Miss West; looking like a wood nymph, in a white muslin gown, and a hat lined and trimmed with green, with all the simplicity of a rural maid, and, at the same time, with all the politeness of a person educated in a court, she made her appearance at the outward door of the cottage.

Bonfoy, tho' Miss West was scarce ever from his thoughts, did not at that moment expect her. As soon as he recognized her at the gate, he rose with precipitation; he overturned the breakfast table in his hurry to let her in.

She

She met him with a blush, which added new charms to her features, and congratulated him upon his recovery with a warmth and elegance of language which plainly shewed how sincerely she rejoiced to see him in safety.

He thanked her for her congratulations by a tender pressure of her hands between his: a liberty he had never attempted before, and which increased the glow in her blushing cheeks, while her eyes sparkled and languished alternately with the pleasure she could not conceal on finding him so well recovered from a wound which might have been, she had heard, productive of very dangerous consequences.

Transported with all these indubitable symptoms of a strong partiality in
his

his favour, he looked what he felt— Then, recollecting the impropriety of indulging a passion which could not, he thought, but appear interested he sighed, leading her to the parlour; he sighed, to give a vent to the fullness of a heart that would not suffer him to declare his sensations. The amiable girl, mistaking those sensations for returns of his complaint, asked him, in the softest accents, if he still felt any pain.

This compassionate question drew from him a reply which he had by no means intended to make—"I cannot be sensible of any uneasiness while *you* are present."

Her only answer was a blush, a still deeper blush; while her lovely eyes were cast on the ground.

When

When she came in, Revel, feeling himself pained by his reflections on his past conduct, looked rather embarrassed. He joined with her, however, in the satisfaction which she expressed at Bonfoy's recovery: by so doing he filled the heart of the *latter* with raptures which were unknown till that moment, and rendered him more and more agreeable in the opinion of the *former*.

Mrs. Malpas, seeing that she stood no chance to receive any of Bonfoy's adorations; and having, indeed, gone considerable lengths with Revel, renewed her connection with *him*. From a taste for the sex which would not permit him to live without an attachment, he readily fell into Mrs. Malpas's revived overtures, and by falling in with *them* was taken off from making observations on Bonfoy and Miss

West: though, indeed, nothing passed between them which could subject either of them to any injurious suspicions.—Bonfoy, indeed, had too much love, and too much honour, to suffer him to make any discovery, designedly, which might, he thought, be prejudicial to the woman of whom he was passionately fond. He very justly believed that Mr. West would not consent to his daughters marriage with a man who had so small a fortune as he knew his to be; and he had too sincere a regard for her to think of attempting to persuade her to disobey her father. He, therefore, determined to content himself with admiring her, with esteeming her: and though this unexpected and most welcome proof of her attention to him increased his love for her, he resolved to confine it to his own breast. At the same time, however, he involuntarily discovered every sentiment

timent of his heart, while it overflowed with joy at her unexpected condescension. Thoroughly engaged by his own satisfactions, he was by them prevented from observing, with accuracy, what passed between Revel and Mrs. Malpas, not only while Miss West was present, but after she was gone.

Revel and Mrs. Malpas, therefore, being left entirely to themselves, indulged their platonic friendship to so great a degree, that the lady, in a very short time, began to find there was more in it than she had ever imagined: she even made serious remonstrances to her pretended admirer, which he treated with the ridicule it, in his opinion, deserved: looking upon his female friend as the sole aggressor, as she had made the first advances towards an intimacy, which, he affirmed,

he could not have declined without acting in an unfriendly, as well as ungallant manner: especially as he placed great confidence in his fair neighbours discretion, as to suppose that she could not, upon any account, be thrown off her guard, or exposed to the least danger from any thing he could say or do.

By talking to her in this strain, he disconcerted her extremely: However, as she well knew that he had spoken nothing but the truth, and that she really had made the first advances, she thought it most prudent to be quiet lest she should expose herself any farther: but as this prudential mode of proceeding required some resolution in her for the reducing of it to practice, she judged it necessary to keep out of the way of a man who appeared but too agreeable in her eyes.

She,

She, therefore, confined herself to her own apartment.

Bonfoy, as soon as he observed this *manoeuvre* on her side, imagined that Singleton might venture to come to the cottage without being disturbed by his female inmate. Accordingly, he made a proposal to Revel to ride to the *ball*, and to insist upon the *justice's* returning with them.

To this proposal Revel willingly consented: and they carried their design into execution the very next morning.

By dint of the most pressing intreaties they prevailed upon Singleton to accept of their invitation.

For the first two days after his arrival, Mrs. Malpas kept pretty close

to her room: but upon turning over her favourite authors to see if she could find a precedent for commencing an intimacy with a perfect stranger, she at length hatched a design, and resolved to proceed to business without delay.

Having first set her servant to enquire into every particular relating to Singleton, she made her entrance, as usual, in the parlour, though with an aspect very different from that with which she had been accustomed to appear. Her dress was very plain, yet it was not unbecoming: it was rather advantageous—and she behaved with a propriety, with a *retenüe*, indeed, which would have deceived the most *knowing ones*; yet, Singleton, instead of being attracted either by her person or behaviour, took not the least notice of her; he hardly seemed to see her;
nor

nor did *she* appear to be particularly attentive to *him*.

Singleton very well pleased with Mrs. Malpas's apparent inattention to him, told Bonfoy that he had not, a great while, met with a woman who gave him so little trouble. He minded her, however, no more than if *she* had not been there: he was barely civil to her when they met at their meals; nor did *she* seem to expect or desire more politeness from him—She never began a conversation with him; *she* never addressed herself to him about the most trifling occurrences: yet it was observable that *she* always came into the room when *he* did, or very soon afterwards, and went out of it when *he* retired.

As Singleton had often declared that he was fond of solitude, Revel and Bonfoy sometimes left him entirely to his private meditations. The *latter* made use of those hours to call at Mr. West's, in return for the kind visit which he had received from that gentleman's daughter. By so doing he had more opportunities of being acquainted with Hebe's many amiable qualities, and of rendering himself, also, agreeable to the family: and as they did not apprehend he had any design in calling upon them, they were very ready to do justice to his merit. The young lady herself was daily inclined to be partial to it; though he never discovered his fondness for her, but by that politeness, and those attentions which every well-bred man would pay to an amiable woman. *Hebe*, on *her* part, was extremely careful not to let
the

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the secret thoughts of her heart be discovered; being much too modest, and having too high an idea of female delicacy, to make any advances; even when she might have some reason to imagine that they would be received with transport.

These young people really believed themselves upon their guard, but their mutual professions had taken too deep root in their hearts, not to occasion, sometimes, a few inadvertancies in their behaviour: but their connections were only discerned by their sincere friends; for by all other people they were quite overlooked. They were only seen by the parties concerned in them: and they were too much interested not to watch each others looks and behaviour minutely, and to set down in their own minds every thing that could bear a construction in their

E 5.

favour.

favour. In this manner, they clearly perceived the tender progress reciprocally made with a satisfaction not to be described: a satisfaction which diffused an uncommon chearfulness over all their looks, and over their whole carriage.

Bonfoy, though he could not, at that time, entertain any hopes of succeeding, had the transporting pleasure to be assured that he was distinguished by the woman whom he preferred to all her sex. Sometimes, it is true, he fancied that her flattering behaviour might have only resulted from her gratitude, in consequence of the relief which he afforded her when she was in a dangerous situation: yet he could not help fancying, also, that she would have discovered no partiality for him, if that accident had not happened. However, his attachment to Miss West,

in

in no shape prevented him from paying the strictest attention to Singleton, both as his friend, and his guest. He did the honours of his house with the greatest assiduity, and Singleton declared, that his reception at the cottage was entirely to his mind. He staid there longer than he intended, and, characteristically, accounted for the length of his visit, by saying, that he had not been pestered with women since his absence from home. He had not, indeed, seen any female at the cottage but Mrs. Malpas, and *she* was, in his opinion, the most inoffensive of her sex, as she had scarce spoken a dozen words during the time he had been in the house with her. At the *ball*, there was a continual noise from morning to night, from the tongues of his sister, or of the maids: very often from the loquacity of them all together.

Bonfoy

84 The L O C K E T.

Bonfoy expressed great pleasure at Singleton's declared approbation of his behaviour, reception, and entertainment; but declined returning with him at that time. When he was gone, he was insensibly led to take notice of the uncommon behaviour of Mrs. Malpas.

Revel, who, for obvious reasons, had no desire to enter into a conversation about her, turned it off—"You know," said he, abruptly, she was "always a *character*."

By such answers as these, he always waved a subject on which he did not chuse to expatiate.—He was, indeed, so greatly taken up in hunting, and other rural amusements, that he was pretty much out of the way of being interrogated concerning Mrs. Malpas, and that lady still keeping herself
very

very much confined to her own apartment, was also more out of the way of observation; so that Bonfoy began to hope she would soon remove herself, as she appeared to take little pleasure either in his company, or the society of his friend, for some time.—She was, indeed, as quiet as it was possible for a woman to be, but he, nevertheless, wished she had not been there, and was really astonished at her chusing to remain in a place from which she seemed to receive hardly any pleasure: having nobody to visit her, except some of the West's family now and then, whose visits she returned, though not often—she certainly led a very dull life.

One morning a servant on horseback arrived in a great hurry from Singleton-hall, with a note from the justice, by which Revel and Bonfoy
were

were earnestly desired to come to him directly.

This summons they both thought it incumbent on them to obey, though the note contained no particular reasons for it. Accordingly they set out.

When they arrived at the *ball*, they found Singleton in an agony.

“Here,” cried he—while Mrs. Grace exhibited a countenance full of the greatest astonishment—“Here, cried he, holding out a paper to them—
 “here is a piece of the most villainous
 “contrivance. That devil at the cottage, that *succubus* in a female shape
 “—but are they not *all* fiends?—has
 “brought a charge against me of
 “which, by all that’s sacred, I swear,
 “I am perfectly innocent; innocent.
 “as

“as the babe who draws its nourishment from his mothers breast.”

Here he stopped, a moment, as if waiting for breath.

Revel and Bonfoy both eagerly asked him what he meant.

“Mean? (replied he) What do I mean? Why here is a sufficient explanation of my meaning—But you should rather ask me what *she* means, who has had the unparalleled impudence to send this paper to me; for I swear again (uttering a still more tremendous oath) that I never exchanged three words with her in my life; and as to writing to her, this is still less likely: and here she has sent me word in this letter that I have given her a promise of marriage

“riage under my hand; telling me
“that she shall be obliged to sue me
“if I do not comply, a proceeding
“which cannot be eligible, she sup-
“poses, to either of us. Eligible, (con-
“tinued he, with an increased vehe-
“mence of voice which discovered the
“extreme perturbation of his mind.)
“What a devil incarnate must this
“woman be, to call upon me, in this
“manner, for the performance of a
“promise which I never could have
“made to any woman, from my tho-
“rough detestation of the cursed sex.
“With *this* impudent creature I never
“had the slightest acquaintance: I
“never spoke a syllable to her but in
“*your* hearing. I am not, indeed, sure
“that I ever spoke a single word to
“her, how then was it possible for me
“to promise her marriage. She, cer-
“tainly, must be the most abandoned
“of

“ of women, or else entirely deprived
“ of her senses, to make this attack
“ upon a man who is an entire stranger
“ to her.”

Revel and Bonfoy equally, and beyond expression at this very unexpected intelligence, looked at each other, and at the first, really were inclined to believe that Singleton's intellects were a little more disordered than usual, not being willing to imagine that Mrs. Malpas would have been guilty of such an action; an action which appeared to *them* totally unaccountable. However, when Singleton shewed them the letter he had received, written with her own hand, they knew not what to think.

Revel, who, in spite of all that had happened, could not resist the fair opportunity

portunity now offered for a little farther diversion with the *justice*, told him, that the best way, the only way, indeed, to settle the business, which might otherwise become very perplexing, was to have a meeting between the parties concerned — “ You may “ then (continued he) confute her in “ person, and such a confutation will “ be more efficacious, than all you can “ write to her, in order to contradict “ her false assertions.”

Singleton who dreaded an interview with a female more than some men would the mouth of a cannon, or the bursting of a bomb within a few yards of them, shifted his seat, began to make wry faces; clapped his hand to his forehead, and discovered every kind of uneasiness and disgust. When he was pressed to go with his young friends to the cottage, he positively refused, drawing

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drawing back, and repeating the monosyllable, NO, several times with great vehemence.

On Revel's telling him that it would be much better for him to meet Mrs. Malpas at the cottage, where he might be entirely unsuspected and alone, than to have her come to the *ball*, where she must necessarily be seen, and her business known by his domestics——“ Oh! “ exclaimed he in a hurry——oh! rather “ not come here; I would not have “ her here for half my income: she “ shall never come here—I will have “ my doors and windows barred to keep “ such a devil incarnate out of my “ house.”

“ You had better go with us then, “ said Bonfoy; that we may all talk “ to her, and endeavour to make her “ sensible of her folly.”

He

He refused for a long time, but at last their persuasions gained upon him, and he consented; declaring, however, that his terror at the bare idea of encountering such an artful toad, had thrown him into a violent perspiration; adding, that he had hardly a dry thread about him.

Bonfoy, who really felt for him, advised him to drink a glass of wine and water; and to try to compose himself.

Revel, who could not possibly help being diverted at the fuss into which Singleton had been thrown, strove to increase it by a number of little things which he let out, intermixing professions of concern for what had happened, and persuading him to give the impertinent widow a proper correction for her consummate assurance.

After

After a momentary pause, Singleton flinging himself into a chair, quite overcome with terror and vexation, cried, "Assurances! oh! there is no correction can cure her of her impudence. This is an attack beyond any thing I ever experienced. I can scarcely swear that I ever promised marriage to any woman—I hate, detest, and solemnly abjure the whole vile insinuating sex.—What then can I say more than I have already said?—No—I will not see her—I will not see this modern Jezebel: I will not expose myself any more. I have already suffered but too much: let her do her worst."

"Very true, (replied Revel) but *that* worst may bring you into a great deal of trouble."

"Besides, (added Bonfoy) you may, by driving her to extremities, make matters

“ matters infinitely more disagreeable;
 “ as I conclude, that she would do any
 “ thing to gratify her revenge. What-
 “ ever aversion, therefore, you may
 “ have to the sight of Mrs. Malpas, you
 “ had better conquer it—go home with
 “ us, and we will do every thing to
 “ make her sensible of the folly of her
 “ conduct.”

Singleton, though he was for a long
 time very loth to comply with this pro-
 posal, was at last prevailed upon to ac-
 company them. His compliance, how-
 ever, cost him a great deal. The con-
 tortions of his face, and the convulsions
 of his whole person, sufficiently evinced
 his sufferings upon the occasion.

On their arrival at the cottage, Revel
 and Bonfoy said they would go, and talk
 to Mr. Malpas.

Singleton

Singleton immediately stopped them, protesting that he would not be left by himself, lest she should break from them and fly down to *him*; adding, "that he would not be left alone with a woman for a million."

This declaration diverted Revel exceedingly, and made even Bonfoy stare. The former told him, that he had thought it best for *them* to see the widow first, and learn the nature of her claim to him, but added, that if he chose to encounter her at once, it was the same thing to *him*.

"She has no claim to *me*, cried Singleton, hastily—no claim at all. No woman upon earth has any claim to *me*: and yet—But I will not give way to such an idea—my brain will be instantly

“stantly set a madding if I do—Hell and
 “furies!—What a thought!”

Here he clinched his fist, stamped, clapped his hand with violence to his forehead, and looked exactly like a Demoniac for some minutes. Becoming on a sudden more tranquil, he said, “I ask your pardon—I was carried away
 “by an over heated imagination to
 “utter things that have no kind of re-
 “lation to the present business. I am
 “now more composed, and ready to do
 “what is proper, provided I do not see
 “this vile woman. I do assure you that
 “I cannot support the sight of such an
 “infamous creature; let me beg you
 “therefore to prevent her coming hi-
 “ther, at least while I am by myself.”

The strange apprehensions which Singleton expressed with regard to the meeting with Mrs. Malpas, the paleness of
 of

of his face, the faltering of his voice, and the tremor of his whole person not only afforded no small mirth to Revel, but filled both him and Bonfoy with astonishment. They could, in no shape, account for the singularity of their friend's behaviour, but by ascribing it to a disorder in his brain. It was natural for them to suppose that his *Mania* was occasioned by some distemper, mental or corporeal, with which his family were unacquainted. His continual railings against women, indeed, could not but lead them to imagine that the neglect, cruelty, or fickleness of some fair-one had made the impression which had reduced him to the unhappy state he was in—yet as he had never let out any thing, either to Mrs. Grace or any body else, relating to what had passed in his mind—as nothing had ever been known or heard of about his having any *connection with, or attachment to* a par-

ticular woman, they concluded that his singularities must have originated from some physical cause; and that, though his antipathy against women was merely accidental, there seemed to be no easy way of curing him of it.

Bonfoy now began to feel the greatest compassion for Singleton, and endeavoured to make Revel feel as much pity as himself. When he found it impossible, with all his efforts, to communicate his own feelings to his friend, he was almost ready to quarrel with him a second time, on account of the inhumanity of his heart.

In consequence of his humane and compassionate disposition, Bonfoy was naturally led not only to indulge Singleton in all his little oddities, but to save him from being exposed to the ridicule of others; even to prevent his
suffering

suffering from the operation of his own fears, as well as from any other causes.

"I will sit with you, sir, said he, while Mr. Revel goes to Mrs. Malpas, and tries to bring her to reason."

"That will be a vain and fruitless attempt," said Singleton.

Mrs. Malpas received Revel with a very haughty air, as he plainly informed her, by the manner in which he accosted her, that he did not make his appearance before her in the character of a lover.

Drawing up at his approach, she asked him, what his business was with her?

F 2

"I come.

“ I come from Mr. Singleton, said
“ he, to know what you meant by writ-
“ ing to him in the manner you have
“ done ?”

“ Mr. Singleton understands my
“ meaning extremely well, replied she,
“ and no body else has any right to en-
“ quire about it.”

“ I am commissioned by my friend,
“ answered he, to talk with you upon
“ this subject, as he is resolved not to
“ see you himself, and also to tell you
“ that what you have written will not
“ be of the least signification. Mr.
“ Singleton is very well assured that he
“ never made the promises with which
“ he is charged; nay more, that he
“ never spoke to you at all.”

“ This

“ This is the greatest of all falsehoods, replied she ; but little credit can be given to the assertions of men who care not what they say to gain their points, and who would not scruple to deny every thing they *have* said.”

“ I am sorry to say, answered Revel, that some women may have reason to complain of this mode of behaviour in men, with regard to them, but I am sure *you* cannot have any ; for when a woman makes warm advances no man is to be reckoned culpable for taking advantage of them. No man, indeed, would be looked upon by the rest of the sex if he neglected such flattering overtures, and if he can prove that he neither sought nor desired them, no woman has a right to be offended with him for any liberties he may have taken with her.—

“ Now this is most likely to be the case
“ with respect to Singleton ; as you cer-
“ tainly began first with *me*, I cannot
“ but suppose that you acted the same
“ part over again, and began first with
“ *him*.”

This was enough—the lady coloured like fire, flew into a violent passion, and accused Revel of having taken a very unwarrantable advantage of her weakness. When the storm of words subsided, she burst into a flood of tears ; imagining he was melted by her weeping, she proceeded with the most earnest entreaties to make it all up with her, by marrying her.

“ Well, replied he, and suppose I
“ were capable of acting in such a
“ manner, could you disappoint Sin-
“ gleton, and render his promise in-
“ effectual ?”

“ Pshaw !

“Pshaw! said she, what a sup-
“position!—do you imagine that I
“would take up with such a strange
“mortal, if *you* were but willing to re-
“pair the wrong you have done me?”
“[beginning to whimper]

“But what do you intend to do with
“your promise?”—replied he, very
gravely.

“Why do you think I ever *had* a
“promise from him? said she—no, no,
“I only counterfeited his hand on pur-
“pose to secure a settlement at all
“events, as I found *you* so unwilling to
“comply with my wishes.”

“Oh!—mighty well! said Revel,
“briskly—since that’s the case, I shall
“let my friend know, that he may re-
“turn home and make himself per-
“fectly easy, as you have really no
F 4 “promise

“promise from him but a *forged*
“*one.*”

“Why surely, said she, starting,
“with all the marks of astonishment in
“her countenance, mixed with anger
“—surely you will never be such a
“devil.”

“But I will, indeed. I shall be happy
“to free a worthy man from the appre-
“hensions he lies under of being har-
“rassed by a pretended promise of mar-
“riage from a woman to whom he
“scarce ever spoke a syllable in his life;
“a woman with whom an alliance would
“be a disgrace.”

“Monster!—exclaimed she, swell-
“ling with passion—Is it thus you use
“me?”

“Not

“Not I, indeed, replied he, with a
“sarcastical smile—I do not intend to
“use you at all.”

Here a second shower of tears burst
from her eyes, and they were accom-
panied with a thousand opprobrious
appellations—Often having called him
deceiver, villain, &c. She abused him
in the severest language, till she was
almost out of breath. Revel coolly
asked her if she knew the punishment
decreed by the law for the commission
of forgery, and then, without waiting
for a reply, left her to digest what he
had said as well as she could.

On his going down to Singleton, he
found him in the greatest agitation of
mind to be conceived: but he soon re-
stored him to all the tranquillity which
he was capable of feeling; though he

still lifted up his hands and eyes, and exclaimed—"What vile deceivers are women! Wretched, truly wretched is the man who has the slightest connection with them"—At the same time he thanked Revel for assisting him in escaping from the snare laid for him, and then prepared to return home, that he might be out of the way of any farther attempts from her disappointed malice.

Bonfoy assured him that he had no occasion to be under the slightest apprehensions of any future attacks from Mrs. Malpas, as he should not suffer her, after what she had done, to remain in his house, not thinking *himself* safe with a woman of *her* turn, and should, therefore, desire her to remove directly.

Agreeably

Agreeably to this resolution he went up to Mrs. Malpas, on purpose to speak to her on the subject—He addressed her in a civil, but in a peremptory manner, yet she was still not at all inclined to quit the cottage: and he was, at length, obliged to tell her that he wanted her apartment, and to insist upon her leaving the house immediately.

This decisive speech was delivered in a tone which plainly shewed that he would not be trifled with. Mrs. Malpas flounced out of the house in a violent passion, assuring him that he should repent of it.

This menace, however, had not the expected effect on Bonfoy, who discovered no emotions but those of joy at her departure.

As

As soon as she was gone, he, at Singleton's request, prepared to accompany him part of the way on his return, though he rather would have chose to remain at the cottage a few days; being, in fact, but just become master of his own house, by the absence of Mrs. Malpas, who had not left him since he took possession of it till *that* day, when she walked off without saying farther to any body; ordering her cloaths to Mr. West's.

Singleton and his companions had not gone five miles on their journey, when, from the side of a wood, a troop of gipsies darted out upon them. Two of the youngest and handsomest advanced towards Revel, and asked him if he would not cross her hand with a piece of silver: adding, that if he did so, they would tell him his fortune.

Revel

Revel replied that he knew his fortune already, but added, in a low voice, "*That* gentleman (looking at Singleton) will not be sorry to be informed of *his*: though he may not, perhaps, be willing to own it,"—giving one of them, at the same time, a shilling—with a wink.

The girl, perfectly comprehending his meaning, went up to Singleton, and asked to look at his hand.

He refused to let her see it.

"Nay—cried she—I will not be denied."

Immediately about a dozen women, young and old, surrounded him, and lifted him off his horse, in spite of all Bonfoy could do to hinder them.

Revel

Revel was ready to burst with laughter.

The young gipsy demanded Singleton's hand again, which he still refused. She then, without any more ceremony, clasped her arms about his neck, and kissed him heartily, telling him, *that* was the way they served all those who refused to let them examine their palms; adding, that it did her heart and soul good to buss such a sweet old man.

Singleton was by no means pleased with this salutation, or the compliment with which it was attended. He struggled to get out of the gipsy's hands, but she still kept her hold; and the more he endeavoured to get loose, the closer she stuck to him. Finding, at last, however, that he grew angry with her,

The L O C K E T. III

her, she quitted her hold, and beckoned her companions who soon joined her. One of the oldest, whose eyes *with scalding rheum were galled and red*, approached Singleton, and told him, that as he had not been pleased with the kisses of a *young* woman, they would try how he liked those of an old one— In consequence of this address, another hag like herself hobbled out of the wood, and while the youngest girl held him, they pawed him, and smuggled him till he roared aloud with vexation and disgust.

Bonfoy, while the good justice was so handled, exhibited every mark of discontent, but could not in any way relieve or assist him.

Revel was ready to expire with laughing; unperceived, however, by Singleton,

ton, as he was behind him, on purpose to prevent Bonfoy's picking another quarrel with him, for making a jest of his friend. It would have been, indeed, almost impossible for any body, the least inclined to mirth, to avoid being diverted with a scene so truly risible; to see a large strong man, as Singleton was, who looked as if he could box a dozen well-grown fellows—kept down, and conquered by a parcel of women, while two of his companions, both young and stout, were unable to assist him—(however disputable the assertion may be)—This was a sight truly comic, truly ridiculous.

[When the gipsies were weary of amusing themselves in the above-mentioned manner, and not before, they let Singleton go.

Bonfoy

Bonfoy sympathized with him in his awkward distress.

Revel was forced to stuff his handkerchief into his mouth to prevent his friends taking offence at the peals of laughter from which he could not, for some time afterwards, refrain.

When they had re-mounted their horses, and were proceeding on their journey, Revel kept a little while in the rear: he then heard the justice loudly complain to Bonfoy of the treatment he had met with, and asking him if his aversion to a sex who had been, from his earliest acquaintance with them, perpetual torments, could be any longer wondered at.

While Bonfoy was subscribing to his opinion, and sympathizing with his sensations, Revel, having in some degree
got

got the better of his propensity to laughter, rode up by his side, and declared that if such had been the behaviour of the greater part of the sex to him, he could not blame him for discovering a dislike to him—"But I am
 "amazed, continued he, at your having
 "met with these flights, as there appears
 "to me to be no rational foundation for
 "them. There is no accounting for their
 "behaviour to you. Your person is very
 "agreeable: you are mild and good-tem-
 "pered when you are not provoked, and
 "have more than once discovered great
 "sensibility: I am apt to imagine, in-
 "deed, that you have a considerable
 "share of tenderness, which would
 "appear very strongly, were it properly
 "called forth."

"Oh! that tenderness—exclaimed
 "Singleton eagerly interrupting him—
 "that tenderness, that sensibility has
 "undone

“ undone me: that, that is the source
“ of all my misery. Had I felt less, I
“ had not been the thing I am.—I have
“ not only been susceptible of the ten-
“ derest sensations, I am still wretched
“ from that cause which renders so many
“ people happy.”

“ Well! but how comes it, replied
“ Revel, that with so susceptible a
“ heart, with so much humanity and
“ gentleness of spirit, you have not
“ met with a congenial soul among the
“ softer sex?”

“ Oh! there—there is my misery—
“ that congenial soul, that softer, bet-
“ ter half of me—and she never de-
“ served that appellation, surely—No
“ —no—continued he, beginning to
“ stamp with his foot.”

“ Well!

“ Well!—answered Revel, but though
 “ *she*—though this one was cruel, might
 “ you not have searched till you had
 “ found another—more kind?”

“ Kind? kind? said he—repeating
 “ the words with very mysterious looks.
 “ —Kind, did you say, my friend?
 “ You are strangely mistaken: you are
 “ in a very great error: but I cannot,
 “ must not, dare not set you right—
 “ You would hate, abhor, despise *me*,
 “ those women you are now so fond of
 “ —and all the world, as I do—You
 “ do not know — And yet I never was
 “ a lewd, debauched, abandoned fel-
 “ low—But there are occasions—there
 “ are temptations. —However, I will
 “ not expose myself any farther, nor
 “ a sex whom I must avoid—whom I
 “ will shun more assiduously than I
 “ would my death.—Yet death would
 “ be

“be more desirable to me than a connection with that creature woman.”

“But if you have been faulty in your behaviour to a woman (answered Revel) why these perpetual invectives against her? It is you who are alone to blame.”

“I to blame, oh no!—But you know nothing of the matter—you talk thus from an entire ignorance of the motives which influence my present conduct; and may you ever remain so—I wish to keep them concealed from all the world—tempt me, therefore, no more to disclose what would give no entertainment to any person who call themselves my friends, which would give *me* the greatest pain.”

As nobody could, with any delicacy, after this declaration, desire to hear the cause

cause of Singleton's particularities, Revel was necessarily obliged to suppress his curiosity; and indeed, when he saw no prospect of gratifying it, he began to be weary of a place, the sameness of which became disagreeable to him; he wanted also to go back to London, but having long been accustomed to Bonfoy's company, he found himself unwilling to move without him; he, therefore, told him, that as he had been much longer from London than he first designed, and as the country began to grow dull, he must set out on his return.

Bonfoy replied, that he should be sorry to see him depart, adding, that he hoped he would soon pay a visit to the cottage again, as he should miss him exceedingly.

“ Miss

"Miss *me*? (said Revel). Why you
"will surely go with me?"

"Indeed, but I cannot, answered
"Bonfoy; I have bought a little place,
"you know, on purpose to settle there:
"for in the humour I am in, I never
"intend to live in London again."

"Not, perhaps, to make any great
"stay there; though that resolution
"would be absurd: but you certainly
"mean to go backward and forward—"

"I do not, you know, (replied Bon-
"foy) like the manner of living in Lon-
"don; neither my fortune, nor my in-
"clination lead me to it."

Revel endeavoured to combat his ob-
jections to a residence in London with all
the arguments he could muster up, but
they,

they were all collected together in vain ; Bonfoy not only persisted in his determination to return to the cottage ; but said, that he should go to it the next day, and that he hoped Mrs. Malpas would never make her appearance there again, as her absence would render his house still more agreeable to him.

In consequence of this determination, Bonfoy acquainted Mr. Singleton and Mrs. Grace with his design to bid them adieu. His information gave them both much concern : Mrs. Grace was particularly affected by it. Seeing him about to leave the *ball* for a longer time than he had done since the commencement of their acquaintance, she began to wish that she had put her first scheme in execution, she wished she had made him sensible how sincerely she preferred him to every man she had ever beheld, notwithstanding her brother's positive insinuations

nuations to the contrary—"Where,
 " (said she to herself) where can I find
 " not only so amiable a man, but so sober
 " a man, so good a man! What sig-
 " nifies the difference of age? it is quite
 " immaterial as he is possessed of a se-
 " riousness above his years? It is not
 " old age itself, that is either offensive
 " or desirable; it is not so much the
 " person, especially in a man, as the
 " behaviour which either pleases or dis-
 " pleases; which is either suitable or
 " unsuitable. Were I to marry to mor-
 " row, I might chuse a man nearer my
 " own age, and yet be as trifling in his
 " conversation, and as irregular in his
 " conduct as a boy. This Bonfoy,
 " who though so much younger than I
 " am, is solid, sensible, and discreet:
 " one would, by his actions, rather think
 " he was five and forty than five and twen-
 " ty. Such a man, therefore, who can and
 Vol. II. G " will

“ will conform to every age, must be the
 “ most desirable person for a husband.”

With these sentiments predominating in her mind, Mrs. Grace imagined that nothing could be wanting but to let Bonfoy know that she thought so well of him, concluding, that by so doing, she should pave the way for addressing her upon a subject, on which she had, a good while longed to be entertained: to be amused with that subject she longed, with the greater earnestness, as she easily supposed that she had no time to lose.

Urged by these potent considerations, Mrs. Grace resolved to seize the first moment before Bonfoy left the *ball*, lest she might not have another opportunity.

With this view she sent for him in her dressing-room, under the pretence of
 having

having something of importance to say to him.

When Bonfoy, in compliance with the summons he received from her, appeared in Mrs. Grace's dressing-room, she began by saying that she had a proposal to make which would be, in *her* opinion, very advantageous to him.

Mrs. Grace really thought she had still great remains of *beauty*, but she also thought that the charms of her person would be out-weighed by the charms of her fortune, though it was a small one. However, though her own fortune was small, she reckoned upon a probable enlargement of it from her brother's estate, as she had always lived with him (the rest of his family being dispersed in different places, and, in every respect detached from them) she presumed so far, indeed, upon this, that she not only resolved to

offer herself, but her brother's fortune also : never considering that it was, for many reasons, more than probable *she* should die first ; yet where there is an estate to be inherited, every body is apt to think of out-living the present possessor.

Mrs. Grace was just beginning to open the matter which lay on her mind to Bonfoy, when Singleton entered the room in a great hurry, with an open letter in his hand which he had a few moments before received from London.

This letter was from Mrs. Malpas's brother, Mr. Burton, who informed him that he heard he had used his sister extremely ill, by giving her a promise of marriage, and afterwards refusing to confirm it ; adding, that if he did not immediately comply with the letter of his agreement, he should instantly proceed

ceed against him according to law, being determined to see justice done to his sister in the most ample manner.

Singleton having put this letter into Bonfoy's hand, desired him to read it.

Bonfoy complied with his request. When he had finished the perusal of it, Singleton exclaimed: "Will this Devil
" never cease to persecute me?"

Bonfoy advised him to take no notice of the letter at all—as he was sure he had not been guilty of the fact with which he was charged.

Revel, however, who at that time joined them, said, that it would be best to go to town, and be upon the spot, to prevent the taking of any measures against him. "If Mrs. Malpas (con-
" tinued he) should actually persist in

“ her demands, you must employ a law-
 “ yer, and have the opinion of council :
 “ your presence in London is absolutely
 “ necessary. I would, therefore, advise
 “ you to set out directly ; and I will ac-
 “ company you with a great deal of
 “ pleasure, and give you all the assistance
 “ in my power.”

Singleton thanked him, but rather
 wished to put off the journey to the ca-
 pitol, to which place he was almost a
 stranger, having never continued there
 any time, as he had a particular aversion
 to the noise and bustle of crowded cities.
 When Bonfoy, however, told him that he
 believed it would be prudent in him to
 be near the spot, in order to frustrate
 Mrs. Malpas's designs, and that he,
 though he had no intention of going to
 London, would accompany him, after
 having left some necessary directions
 with the people at the cottage, Singleton
 consented ;

consented; yet he declared that he hated London, and that he should not enjoy an hour during his stay there, as he could not avoid seeing women without number in so populous a city—concluding, that as he had already suffered so much from the sex, he did not desire to see another woman as long as he lived.

Revel smiling, said, that they were very necessary evils; and that the man who fancied he could do without them, would find himself, in the end, most egregiously mistaken.

Bonfoy assented, in his heart, to his friend's assertion, and rode nearer to the cottage, the neighbourhood of which he could not think of leaving, till he had called at Mr. West's. But what was his mortification to hear the servant tell him

that

that none of the family were at home, though he saw them at the same time at the window.

This mode of behaviour disturbed his ideas exceedingly, and it made him return to Singleton's with his spirits greatly depressed.

Mrs. Grace, who had felt herself not a little disappointed at the unlooked for journey to London, would have seized this moment to declare her intentions in Bonfoy's favour; but whether he guessed those intentions, or not—it is not transpired; certain it is, that she saw him depart without having accomplished her design.

The first days of their journey passed off tolerably; that is, without any remarkable occurrences, though Singleton was in one of his worst humours, and

and though Bonfoy was actually overwhelmed with melancholy.

When they put up for the night, they ordered two boiled chickens, and some tarts for supper.

Singleton retired early. Bonfoy was not in the least inclined to sleep, Revel, therefore, who loved to chat, found it no difficult matter to prevail on him to sit later than he usually did.

Just when they thought of going to rest, they were alarmed by a violent outcry of murder—murder—help—help!

These outcries coming from above, they ran up stairs to the room, from whence the noise proceeded.

On their entrance, they saw Singleton standing by the side of the bed,

quite undressed, and struggling to get away from a woman in bed, who was pulling him towards her by the flap of his shirt which she had almost tore off in the contest.

Here was a fresh excitement of Revel's risibility.

Bonfoy starting, asked Singleton what was the matter, and was seconded by all the people in the house, who were by this time assembled in the chamber.

The woman in bed then bawled out —“that man (pointing to Singleton) at-
tempted to ravish me.”

Singleton loudly denied this charge, adding, that she had the most scandalous designs upon his person, by pulling him violently to the bed-side, from which he had removed as soon as
he

he found that he had got into the wrong chamber by mistake.

Bonfoy supported this declaration, by saying that every word Singleton had said was to be depended upon, as he was known to be a profest woman-hater, and had a very strong dislike to the whole sex.

At this assertion all the women in the room began to make faces—some one of them spit at him. Another exclaimed—“what a filthy fellow to hate women!”—Faugh! what a nasty beast “must he be (said a third) he stinks “alive (added a fourth);—I would not “touch him with a pair of tongs.”

The lady who had complained of his impudent attack upon her virtue, slipping on a loose gown and petticoat, stepped from the bed, took Singleton by the

the shoulders, and driving him before her, called him all the mean, pitiful, shabby rascals she could think of—adding, that she would not bear such impudence from any man, especially from such a contemptible fellow, who had declared an aversion to the sex, and who deserved to be well-handled for his pains—“and I will, myself, undertake “to punish you” (continued she) — pushing him with a masculine violence to the door of the chamber. The rest of the women all followed, clapping their hands at him, and hooting him for the dislike he had—according to Bonfoy’s declaration to the sex.

The men laughed and sneered to see the lady, as she called herself, who had complained of his making an attempt upon her person, so perfectly capable of defending it—but, though every body was soon convinced that it was not worth
any

any body's attention, and treated her with the neglect she deserved, they all believed that Singleton had suffered no scandal when he was upbraided for his dislike to the ladies, and pointed a great many jests at him. Every female in the family, and even of the neighbourhood, who had come in upon the noise occasioned by this whimsical incident, conceived as natural an aversion for him, as he could possibly feel for *them*, and even the children catching the language of their mothers and nurses, lisped out, "There goes the woman-hater."

Singleton now getting into the chaise, pursued a journey, a journey which he undertook with a very ill will, and which was rendered still more disagreeable to him by the last adventure, and arrived safe in the great city without any farther molestation, taking up his quarters at a hair-dresser's, of whom Bonfoy had some knowledge,

knowledge, and who being a single man, let out his first floor upon terms tolerably reasonable; the cheapness of the lodgings was not material to Singleton, but he was very well pleased to find that there was no females in the family: not even a *she-dog*. There was indeed only a girl, by way of servant, to make the beds, &c. whom he rarely saw: to whom he rarely spoke. He chiefly employed himself in consulting council, to know how he should in the most effectual manner convict Mrs. Malpas of forgery, as he was morally certain that he had not wrote a single line to her. His time, however, was not totally engaged in the business which brought him to town: he had a great deal of leisure, and both Revel and Bonfoy would have had him filled it up, by going to see every thing worthy of his attention, and taking his part of the public diversions; but though he had, unlike most people
 who

who live at a distance from the metropolis, no high relish for such amusements; he would not have refused to gratify the little curiosity he felt in himself for fights, could he have seen them without those swarms of females, who make, by far, the greatest number of people in every public place. Singleton was particularly shocked whenever he heard of a numerous female audience at a trial, during which the most indelicate expressions were, necessarily, to be introduced: expressions, which no truly modest woman would wish to hear in private, much less in a court of justice: he was also not a little shocked at the eagerness with which thousands of the fair-sex hurry to an *execution*: he could not possibly reconcile *that* eagerness with their natural tenderness and sensibility. In short, no public places pleased him so much as coffee-houses, because he was sure to find no women in *them*, no
 women

women, at least, but in the *bar*, which he always passed with as much quickness and trepidation as a debtor would the door of a dun, or the dwelling of a baliff.

While he was amusing himself one morning at a coffee-house with the papers of the day, he saw that there was a coffee-room advertised to be opened, for the ladies as well as the gentlemen, of an evening after the opera; and he could not help expressing how much he was satisfied with a piece of intelligence which prevented him from committing an inadvertancy, by stepping into this assembly of female orators of distinction, whom of all people he should most studiously endeavour every where to avoid.

A gen;

A gentleman, who stood by, observing him, fell into his humour, and said,
 " It is indeed, sir, most scandalous, as
 " you say, for women, whose station is
 " retirement, and whose greatest glory
 " is to be least known, to be ever
 " thrusting themselves in the face of the
 " world, as if they intended to set
 " themselves up to public sale, like
 " cattle at market, to be purchased by
 " the best bidder. Plays, balls, concerts,
 " and operas one would think
 " were sufficient diversion to them,
 " but such is their insatiable thirst after
 " pleasure, that I know two very extraordinary
 " instances, where they disguised themselves in mens cloaths, on
 " purpose to obtrude where the modest
 " and decent ought never to appear.—
 " One of these licentious females attended
 " a lecture of anatomy, at which
 " those parts of the human body were
 " exposed and explained, of which delicacy

"licacy required the concealment. The
 "other exhibited herself at an academy
 "of painters, who were drawing a
 "figure of the God *Priapus* from a
 "strong healthy young fellow, who
 "stood naked before them for a model.
 "Now, sir, continued he, do you
 "judge whether there is any real mo-
 "desty left among our women:—forry
 "I am to say that there are too many
 "abandoned, shameful wantons about
 "town, and therefore I do not wonder
 "that you wish to avoid having any
 "connections with them."

Singleton lifted up his hands and eyes
 at this strange information, though he
 at first had some doubt with regard to
 the truth of it—and swore never to
 come in the way of such scandals to
 their sex.

"You

"You are not married then, I presume, sir, said the gentleman."

"Married!—replied Singleton—no certainly."

"Nor keep a girl?"

"Why, surely, answered the justice, starting at the question, that is a very unnecessary interrogation."

"I don't know, sir, said the gentleman; there are times and seasons when a man's necessities drive him, as much as he may despise the vices and follies of the fair sex, and dread a serious intimacy with them, to wish for a female help-mate; and then you know an easy convenient little toad, who has no qualms of conscience, no scruples, no airs—a kind of

“ of *toujours prêt* may be absolutely necessary.”

“ May be so, sir, said Singleton
 “ gravely, to *you* and *some* men, but
 “ he is certainly not only happier, but
 “ also keeps up the dignity of his
 “ nature better, who has no wants of
 “ that kind.”

“ And pray, sir, while you are keeping up the dignity of your nature,
 “ how is the propagation of the human
 “ species to be carried on?”

“ ’Tis no matter whether they are
 “ propagated or not, replied Singleton,
 “ as they are so little deserving of their
 “ existence.”

“ How, sir?—said another gentleman, who had not yet spoke—would
 “ you put an end to propagation?—
 “ What

“What then would become of our
“poor? They are already beginning
“to imitate the rich, lead debauched
“lives like them, and are, in general,
“such sensualists that they do no good
“in their generation. The world would
“soon be unpeopled if every body was
“of your opinion.”

“It might be so, for ought I care,
“replied Singleton. If every man
“was as unhappy as I am, he would
“have no reason to be pleased with his
“having been born.”

The last speaker, now advancing towards the justice, looked more narrowly in his face, he then exclaimed—“Mr. Singleton!—have I the pleasure of
“seeing *you* in town?”

Upon this address, Singleton also examining the speaker's countenance,
thought

thought he recognized Mr. Hales. He then spoke to him with much civility, though it was very easy, at the same time, to see that the meeting with him was not perfectly agreeable.

Mr. Hales, however, taking no notice of the discoveries he had made, very politely invited Singleton to come and see him at his chambers in the Temple; adding, that he always resided there when he was in London, as he thought chambers were more retired and less noisy, certainly less exposed to annoyances from women and children than common lodging-houses; concluding, that as he had no female belonging to him to superintend his family, he did not choose to be troubled with a house of his own in town, finding one in the country as much as he could well look after.

Singleton

Singleton having met with few men who either *could* or *would* live without any connection with a sex who were particularly disagreeable to *him*, listened with some degree of attention to the latter part of Mr. Hales's speech, and thought he might venture to promise to call upon him sooner than most men, who were, he said, pestered with either wives, daughters, sisters, neices, cousins, mistresses, or maids. A man, therefore, who had none of these plagues belonging to him, was, in his opinion, rather uncommon, and so much the more a desirable companion. Hales, on the other hand, thought he had a very good opportunity to return the civilities he had received from the hospitable justice, in consequence of his embarrassing situation with Mrs. Monson and the other ladies, mentioned in the first volume of this history.

On

On the following evening, Singleton set out, after dark, towards the temple.

Ascending the stair-case leading to Hales's chambers, he was met on the second landing place by a smart young female, as she appeared to be by the light of the lamp, who pulled him by the sleeve, and asked him to treat her with a pint of wine. He gave her no answer, but pushed on. She stopped him, however, and said, "Nay, you *shall* treat me now—for I will not be denied."

"Stand off, woman, cried he, raising his voice, and shoving her rather rudely from him—I detest your whole sex."

"Oh! do you?—replied she—then I see what *you* are; and I'll do for you

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“ you presently—such unnatural mon-
“ sters as *you* ought to be treated as
“ they deserve.”

She then, laying hold of him, bawled
as loud as she could, “ *Thieves! mur-*
“ *der! help! murder! thieves! help!*
“ *help!*”

Instantly people ran from all quarters
to the spot where Singleton was
actually struggling with a girl of the
town.

This woman, with the greatest
assurance, addressing the croud about
her, begged them to seize the fellow
she had secured, for having while he
brushed by her on the stair-case picked
her pocket of a white handkerchief
and her purse, adding, that he was mak-
ing off with his booty when she caught
Vol. II. H him

him by the coat; but that as her strength was almost exhausted, he would have escaped if they had not come to her assistance.

Singleton, alarmed at a charge of such a nature, could only lift up his hands and eyes in silence, being almost petrified with astonishment. However, when the mob advanced to search him, he attempted to defend himself, and swore that the accusation was as false as it was true that his accuser was the most impudent *brim* he had ever met with in his life.

“ You see, gentlemen, said the girl,
 “ addressing herself to the surrounding
 “ people, how great his assurance is—
 “ you may be certain from his impu-
 “ dence that he is a rogue. However,
 “ if you will but take my handkerchief
 “ and money from him, and restore
 “ them

“ them to me, I will consent to your
“ letting him go, though he well de-
“ serves to be ducked.”

“ Aye, aye, cried they, all with one
“ voice, away with him, away with
“ him ; carry him to the stairs, and
“ duck him well.”

But before they proceeded to the duck-
ing diversion, they turned out their pri-
soner's pockets ; in them they found a
white and a coloured handkerchief, a
purse containing some guineas and
silver, which she was ready, she said,
immediately to swear to.

Singleton, finding every body against
him, desired to be heard a moment ; he
then declared who he was, adding that
he was going to see Mr. Hales, whose
chambers were upon the second floor ;

that the woman who accused him had attacked him, and insisted upon his giving her a pint of wine.

She briskly replied, "'Tis false—
" this is a stale trick in order to get off.
" I will swear before any justice of
" the peace in the kindom that he took
" my purse and handkerchief out of my
" pocket."

Just as the majority of Singleton's inconsiderate enemies were going to make a decision in favour of his false accuser, Mr. Hales, who had by this time heard the bustle, though he had not the least idea of Singleton's being concerned in it, descended, and as soon as he saw his hospitable entertainer so very ill treated, immediately took his part. Finding, however, that all he could say had little weight with the crowd, who were all on the side of his adversary

adversary, he came to her, and asked her what sum she had in her purse, as that alone would determine whether it was really her property or not.

She pertly replied, that she could not tell exactly, but supposed there might be about ten guineas and some odd shillings.

“The purse then, said Hales, cannot “be yours.” (taking it from the person who held it in his hand)—He then asked Singleton aloud, what the purse contained?

He replied, “Five guineas, eleven “shillings, and a six-pence.”

Hales then appealed to the crowd in this manner, “Do you think now that “my friend, whom you have very falsely

H 3

“suspected.

“ suspected of picking a pocket, could
 “ have told the exact sum which the
 “ purse contained, and which he must
 “ have hastily snatched from his accuser
 “ in passing her on the stair-case, if it
 “ had not been his own property ?”

On their answering in the negative,
 he emptied the purse before them, shew-
 ed them that there were exactly five
 guineas, eleven shillings, and six-pence,
 and no more ; and then told them, that
 he hoped they were convinced they had
 been mistaken in supposing a gentleman,
 like his friend, could be guilty of
 such an action ; adding, that as they
 were now assured he was not, he hoped
 they would now see justice done to the
 infamous woman who had exposed
 him to so much shame and danger.

The

The mob, ever in extremes, instantly took the hint, shouted their applause, carried off the lady, and gave her a severe ducking.

Hales in the mean time conducted Singleton to his own apartment, and there congratulated him upon his escape. Singleton thanked him in the warmest terms for his friendly interposition in his behalf, and declared he had greatly overpaid the few civillities he had been able to shew him at the *Hall*.

Hales at the same time condemned the insolence of those women, and the error in our *Police* in suffering them to infect our public streets.

Singleton concurred heartily with Mr. Hales in all his spirited effusions against the *Police*, but so largely ex-

patiated upon the impudence of women in general, that Hales, with a particular friendliness, ventured to caution him not to be too liberal of his invectives in public, against a sex who, tho' by no means, without faults, were also possessors of many virtues which must be acknowledged; which he himself would surely allow, if he conversed with the most amiable among them, and who would be, most probably, defended at his expence: "this was really the case
 "at the coffee-house, continued Hales,
 "where we met—You was rather rudely
 "attacked for your violent aversion to
 "women, and exposed to the ridicule
 "of the whole room: and had I not
 "endeavoured to stem the tide of the
 "gathering raillery, you would have
 "been almost overwhelmed by it: if
 "then, concluded he, you *cannot* conquer
 "your antipathy to the fair sex,
 "you had better suppress your resentment
 "ment

“ment against them in public, at least:
 “as you will by so proceeding, not
 “only create a great deal more raillery,
 “than you may be able to bear, but
 “throw yourself, perhaps, into a situa-
 “tion from which you may find it no
 “easy matter to disengage yourself.”

Singleton who had been too long accustomed to give a vent to his sentiments with the greatest freedom, could not, by any means, relish Hales's advice to curb them, though his admonitions were so salutary. However, as that gentleman had really been very serviceable to him, he contented himself with telling him that if he knew half the provocation he had met with, he would not think him so very blameable as he imagined. He then took his leave, after having determined not to come in his way again if he could help it, and return to the country as

soon as possible, having heard nothing either from Mrs. Malpas or her brother since his arrival in town. He, therefore, told Bonfoy that he would go back again.

Bonfoy, who had been very uneasy ever since he left —shire, upon account of his being *denied* at Mr. West's, very readily consented to re-company him; but he could not prevail on Revel to be of the party, who told him that the country was as dismal in winter, as it was pleasant in summer: adding every thing he could think of to keep his friend with him till spring: finding, however, that he could not succeed, he swore that neither of them should go till they had been at the *play*.

Singleton, as usual, objected to seeing any more representations of the faults
and

and follies of women, which were, he said, but too common in real life, and therefore, could afford no diversion or improvement when exposed upon the stage. Revel, however, would not be repulsed; and, therefore, they went to the *Chances*.

As *Garrick* played the principal part in this loose play, the house was full very soon: and they found it difficult to get tolerable seats in the pit.

Bonfoy in the crowd, was separated from Singleton and Revel; the latter happened to be placed near an old gentlewoman and her daughter: behind *them* sat four or five young fellows who came on purpose to amuse themselves, though at every body's expence in the *house*. To heighten their amusement, they soon began to say and do every thing they could think
of

of to put the young lady out of countenance; they were, indeed, so very offensive that they made both *her* and her mother exceedingly uneasy. The latter applied to Singleton, and begged his protection for her and her daughter.

In answer to that application he replied that he never troubled himself about any woman.

A very prudent resolution, said one of the above-mentioned young fellows. "I would to G—d, added he, winking at his companion, I had been as discreet."

"You have suffered then, sir, by that deceitful sex," answered Singleton.

"Oh!

“ Oh! yes! replied he: I have suffered considerably both in my purse
“ and my person: so much, indeed,
“ have I suffered, that I think I have
“ a right to make reprisals—When I
“ meet, therefore, with a girl to my
“ taste, I look upon her as fair game,
“ seize her as lawful prey, and make
“ her atone for the mischiefs I have
“ received from others of her sex.”

“ And so bring greater evils upon
“ your head? answered Singleton.—
“ Now I, knowing that there is no
“ kind of safety in the slightest con-
“ nection with women, shun them as
“ I would a pestilential fever.”

“ Umph!” cried the young fellow
who had spoken before — surveying
Singleton’s figure with a critical atten-
tion — “ It is possible that you may
“ have received a still worse disorder
“ from

“from them; for your body and brain
“appear distempered.”

To this Singleton made no reply, he only returned a look of indignation, and sat with his back to them. They then went on ridiculing every thing that was either decent or serious till the play began.

The play afforded them fresh matter for the continuance of their impertinence.

The aggrieved lady again requested Singleton's assistance. He made no answer. She then assured him that she only wanted him to assist her in getting out of the house with her mother, as they were to have met company there, who had been, she supposed

posed, prevented from keeping their appointment by the crowd.

Singleton was still silent, and his attention, indeed, was now so deeply engaged by the play, that he scarce knew what was said or done about him: he began to be quite interested in the business of the performance. He changed colour often, made many wry faces, and gave so many sudden starts, that all who sat near him concluded he was insane; and none reckoned upon his insanity more than the young fellows who had been so troublesome to the lady's daughter, and who repeated their insolence to her, on purpose to provoke her mother to endeavour to gain Singleton over to her side, that they might have an opportunity of diverting themselves with him, by taking her from him: but they could not succeed. Singleton
grew

grew more and more averse to intermeddling, and Revel, finding that the ladies began to be really distressed, offered his service to defend them; his offers were gladly accepted: so young, and so able a protector, was by no means disagreeable to those who had made it necessary for them to implore the assistance of strangers.

While Revel was conducting his fair charge out of the house, one of these troublesome young fellows jostled him, purposely, to make him turn and defend himself; the rest attacked Singleton in a very brutal manner, in order to afford some diversion, and call Revel's attention from the lady.

Just at that moment Bonfoy advancing towards them, and seeing his friend in danger, flew to his aid, tho' it cost him dear: for while he was
keeping

keeping them off Singleton, he received some disagreeable blows on his head, with a stick, which caused a slight contusion, and obliged him to have a surgeon as soon as he got to his lodgings. He first, however, routed his adversaries, after having risked his own life in preserving Singleton from their attacks.

Bonfoy's very generous and noble behaviour to Singleton upon this occasion, greatly increased the esteem and affection which he had already felt for him, and he could hardly find words for the expression of his gratitude.

While Bonfoy was attending Singleton home, Revel saw the ladies under his convoy safe to their lodgings.— There he was agreeably surprized with a sight of Mrs. Monson, who was aunt to the young lady so undeservedly insulted

sulted that evening, and who had been of her party in the pit; but, separated from her, had been obliged to go to another part of the house.

When Mrs. and Miss Greville were a little recovered from their fright, Revel took his leave, saying that he would call the next day, with their permission, and ask them how they did.

The ladies having assured him that they should be very glad to see him, and again thanked him for the service he had done them, he hurried to Bonfoy's lodgings.

On his arrival at his friends apartments, he found him exceedingly disordered; he also found Singleton expressing much anxiety on his account, and cursing the authors of the pain which he endured.

“I hope

"I hope, said Revel to Singleton,
"you will not always lay the blame
"upon the women; they have, cer-
"tainly, had *no hand in this affair*;
"men have been the only perpetrators
"of the injury which poor Charles has
"received."

"Yes, replied Singleton, eagerly;
"but pray were not women the first
"causes of it: would the men have
"troubled themselves in the least about
"us, if there had been no women in
"the house. The women who sat by
"*me* were as infamous, I suppose, in
"*their* way, as those young fellows
"could be in an other."

"How extremely you wrong them,
"replied Revel; they are the sister
"and niece of Mrs. Monson, who was
"one of the party in the coach which
"was overturned near the *ball*: the
"friend

“ friend of Miss West, added he, with
“ a significant look at Bonfoy.”

“ Oh! are they Mrs. *Monson*’s relations? cried Singleton: I shall not
“ then wonder at any thing they do—
“ I think I have reason to remember
“ Mrs. Monson—What a wanton piece
“ of flesh.”—

“ Hold your profane tongue, replied
“ Revel. Bonfoy will join with me
“ in acquitting her of having any other
“ design than to secure to herself your
“ protection, at a time when she was in
“ such great danger, as she thought,
“ from the fire.”

“ Aye, it was only *as she thought*—
“ Women are always thinking of what
“ they ought not to think of.”

“ Well!

“ Well! say no more of them now,
“ answered Revel; leave snarling for
“ once, at least, for certainly *she* whom
“ I have just quitted is one of the love-
“ liest girls my eyes ever beheld.”

“ So, you are taken in at last, then?
“ said Singleton with an ironical smile—
“ but you will have enough of it by
“ and by; you will surely live to re-
“ pent of it. The man who gives
“ himself up to a woman needs no
“ other trouble: the sex were sent into
“ the world to scourge us.”

“ Pshaw? prythee Singleton let us
“ drop the subject,” said Revel inter-
rupting him—

“ Aye, and the girl too by all
“ means—It is the best thing you can
“ do.”

It

In this manner did Singleton jeer upon his young friends, but not till the surgeon had assured him, that Bonfoy was in no danger; though it might be a considerable time before he was quite well.

During the time of Bonfoy's confinement, Singleton resolved to shut himself up along with him—This resolution was exceedingly agreeable to Bonfoy, who received much pleasure from his attachment to him, and always treated him with a kind of compassionate friendliness on account of those singularities, which, as he saw plainly he could not help, rendered him, in his opinion, a still greater object of pity: and he behaved to him, in consequence of that opinion, in so *kind* a manner, that he became strongly attached to him.

Singleton

Singleton spent whole days with Bonfoy: sometimes he read to him; frequently talked to him for hours together, and never appeared so collected and sensible as since this last accident.

While Bonfoy was one day expressing to the justice the satisfaction he felt from his repeated civilities, the latter, with a most benevolent smile, which gave a particularly-pleasing turn to his naturally fine features, said—"Go, go —you are a flatterer; I do not deserve so many praises: I am persuaded that you have been, from your own great merit, accustomed to meet with kindnesses from many people."

"Not on account of my own merit, replied Bonfoy; but for the goodness of others have had much reason

"to

“to be grateful; and yet I can assure
 “you honestly, that though I have
 “received very great favours, such as
 “few people can boast of, none ever
 “gave me so much pleasure as those
 “which you have, from time to time,
 “conferred on me.”

Singleton bowed an acknowledgement,
 and Bonfoy continued——

“You would not imagine, perhaps,
 “that I owe almost all I possess to the
 “generosity and benevolence of a wor-
 “thy man, to whom I was once a
 “stranger, who was in no way related
 “to me, and who took me in naked, I
 “may say, and cloathed me; he did
 “more, he paid for my being taught
 “all that I at present know, and cer-
 “tainly the improvement of the mind
 “is more for our present and future
 “advantage

“ advantage than either the feeding of
 “ the body or the cloathing of it. I
 “ might have been warmly, though
 “ coarsely clad; I might have been
 “ plentifully fed without having been
 “ properly taught to be grateful to my
 “ benefactor — without having been
 “ taught that to give is more blessed
 “ than to receive. But you are sur-
 “ prised, sir — continued Bonfoy — at
 “ this rhapsody — my gratitude *will*
 “ sometimes break forth, when I re-
 “ flect on what I enjoy through the
 “ liberality of my lost friend.”

Here Singleton, though very far from being of a prying disposition, could not resist the desire he had to hear Bonfoy explain what appeared to him, at *that* time, rather mysterious. He had looked upon his young friend as a man of family and fortune, though, indeed, he was only led to that supposition from

his carriage and conduct, from the commencement of his acquaintance with him. He therefore threw out a hint which made Bonfoy conclude that some information, with regard to his affairs, would not be disagreeable to him.

“ My name, said he, was not originally Bonfoy—my father I cannot remember, as my mother was a widow from my earliest infancy—she was possessed of a very slender income, which was but just sufficient to supply us with the common necessities of life. She put me to school, however, in the village where she lodged —there I was soon distinguished by Mr. Bonfoy, a gentleman of a pretty considerable fortune, very intimate with the master. He took me to his house to spend whole days, and continually

“tinuully gave me fruit, and money
 “to buy such trifles as pleased lads of
 “my age at that time. He engaged
 “my affections, indeed, so powerfully,
 “that whenever he neglected me, I be-
 “came melancholy and full of anxiety
 “—when he took notice of me again
 “I expressed so much joy, that he at
 “length told my mother, he would
 “provide for me entirely, if she would
 “give her consent. An offer so un-
 “commonly generous, so greatly to
 “my advantage, my mother accepted
 “with the warmest acknowledgements.
 “Accordingly, I was, by *his* order,
 “prepared for the university, and sent
 “to Cambridge, at his expence. There
 “I was left to pursue the studies which
 “were most agreeable to me; he told
 “me, indeed, when he placed me in
 “the college he had fixed upon, not to
 “make study a toil, but a pleasure,
 “and I should have something more

“ to depend on for my subsistence than
“ learning. I therefore applied with
“ the greater assiduity, being left to act
“ as my humour directed, and made
“ what many people would have thought
“ a task, merely an amusement. By
“ this assiduity of mine I gave my
“ generous benefactor so much pleasure
“ that he promised to make an alteration
“ in his will, greatly to my advantage ;
“ but as he died suddenly, before he
“ had executed the intended change in
“ my favour, he only left me two hun-
“ dred pounds a year. This income,
“ though far short of what he had de-
“ signed to leave me, was yet much
“ more than I could possibly have, with
“ any degree of reason, expected. In-
“ stead, therefore, of lamenting his
“ not having left me any more, I only
“ mourned the loss of so excellent a
“ friend, whose bounty had not only
“ made me independant, but had placed
“ it

" it in my power to render my mother's
 " situation more easy, and return the
 " care and tenderness she had ever shewn
 " me ; but she enjoyed the little ad-
 " dition I was able to make to her in-
 " come scarce a twelvemonth. She ap-
 " peared, indeed, to be in a decline from
 " the first remembrance I had of her—
 " she was ever oppressed with a deep
 " melancholy, to the removal of which
 " all my little efforts and infant assidui-
 " ties were ineffectual ; nor were the
 " arguments I made use of when I grew
 " up, and was more capable of rea-
 " soning with her, to raise her from that
 " state of despair, more successful.—
 " Dejected, however, and unhappy as
 " she always seemed to be, she was also
 " very dear to me, as she ever treated
 " me with the tenderest affection. Of
 " course, when I lost *her*, I bid adieu to
 " every thing pleasurable to me. Her
 " death happening so soon after the de-
 "

“ cease of Mr. Bonfoy, who had given
“ me his name, when he adopted me
“ for his son, with my mothers con-
“ sent, afflicted me exceedingly.”

Here Singleton, in spite of his great regard for Bonfoy, and desire to hear the remainder of the story, could not help interrupting him.

“ I am afraid, said he, that your
“ mother was too much like the rest of
“ her perfidious sex, and played false
“ somewhere.”

This oblique reflection on his mother's continence would have given Bonfoy a great deal of uneasiness, had he not considered that Singleton looked upon every woman in the world in the worst light, and discovered failings which other men could not discern ; these were
the

the weakneſſes for which his friend was ſtrongly diſtinguiſhed, and rather to be deemed miſfortunes than faults; he, therefore, took no notice of Singleton's obſervation, but proceeded in his narrative.—“ When I had loſt my two beſt
 “ and deareſt friends, I felt a void in
 “ my heart that nothing could fill up.
 “ Every place where I had been uſed to
 “ ſee them, and converſe with them,
 “ brought them ſo ſtrongly to my me-
 “ mory, and reminded me ſo exceeding-
 “ ly of the very great loſs I had ſustain-
 “ ed by their deaths, that I could not
 “ bear to remain in the village in which
 “ I had lived ſo much beloved by them.
 “ I, therefore, returned to college, but
 “ in ſo dejected a ſtate of mind, that I
 “ was incapable of making the leaſt
 “ effort to rouse myſelf.”

“ At this time Revel, with whom I had been long upon the most sociable footing, seeing my depression, kindly undertook to find out a constant succession of amusements that might drive the melancholy ideas from my mind, with which it was filled :—but he soon discovered that the sameness of my way of life in college rather increased than lessened my dejection. In consequence of this discovery, he insisted upon my going with him to London, where he not only carried me to all public places, but introduced me to still higher pleasures, the pleasures of society with people of the first understanding and taste : people, however, who were also in an exalted rank of life, and who lived in a style too expensive for *me*, as my small fortune, though it was sufficient to furnish one with all the real comforts of life, would by no means allow me to put myself upon a footing with those who were

were willing to make me their companions. They did more; they were continually pressing me to be upon their parties: at first, like a young man, I complied with this solicitation, and was extremely well pleased with my fashionable connexions, but I found, in a short time, and experienced with pleasure, that I could be as happy in the more private and retired walks of life; happier, indeed, in them, than in all the parade and bustle of the world. With these sentiments, I determined to quit London, and to make a tour through the pleasantest counties of England, that I might have an opportunity of chusing an agreeable situation, at once rural and retired, yet not quite out of the reach of society. With this design I began my journey, which ended at the *hall*—There I was accompanied by Revel, when he had said and done every thing he could to dissuade me from a retirement, want-

ing to make me believe also that I should be sorry afterwards, in having left the world : but he talked in vain. I had often heard, and I was soon convinced that when people give way to any pleasure, it grows upon them, and they become, at length, so captivated by it that they are not capable of relinquishing what they had been accustomed to enjoy, for any continuance. I thought therefore, that no persons should indulge themselves freely in pleasures, the permanence of which could not be with the least degree of probably ascertained, and which could not be enjoyed at all indeed with convenience or discretion. These were the motives which urged me to purchase the little cottage, as it appeared to be in the very situation I had wished for : and its proximity to the *ball* was an additional inducement — my first acquaintance with Mr. Single-

ton

ton made me desirous of being but at a very small distance from him.”—

Singleton bowed, and his eyes sparkled with his acknowledgments.

“ Had I known, added Bonfoy, that
 “ my settlements near *you*, Sir, and my
 “ desire to see you sometimes as a visitor
 “ *could have been attended* with the dis-
 “ agreeable consequences, with which *it*
 “ *has been* attended, I would on no
 “ account have given way to the indul-
 “ gence of my inclination, however
 “ strong it might have been for the en-
 “ joyment of *your* society.”

Singleton thanked him for the regard
 he expressed for him, and assured him
 that it was reciprocal; adding, that
 though Mrs. Malpas's conduct had been
 doubly vexatious to him on account of
 his

his hatred to her mischievous sex, he would rather endure all her malice than have been without the knowledge of his young friend.

While the two friends were, in this manner, exchanging their affectionate sentiments, Hales sent up his name, with the addition of Mr. Dormer's.

Bonfoy ordered the servant to shew them into the parlour, and to tell them that he would wait upon them immediately.

Hales very good naturedly congratulated him upon his recovery, and said, he should have called on him for that purpose alone, had not business brought him. "My present business (continued he) is to introduce this gentleman, Mr. Dormer, to Mr. Singleton, as he heard that he was at *your* lodgings."

Mr. Dormer

Mr. Dormer was retained as council by Mrs. Malpas, but having accidentally met Mr. Singleton at the coffee-house, and heard him pour out very severe invectives against the fair sex—one of whom had rendered him truly miserable—he was struck with the similarity of their sentiments, and immediately wished to be acquainted with a person who appeared to think as *he* did, and finding, upon enquiry, that he was his client's antagonist, he instantly resolved not to plead against him, but to make a friendship with him, if possible. Seeing me again, at the same place, he enquired more particulars of me concerning him, and in consequence of my answers to his interrogations, intreated me to carry him directly to Mr. Singleton, desiring me at the same time, to assure him, that he never would plead against him.

Such

Such was the introduction to the meeting between Mr. Dormer and Mr. Singleton: a meeting perfectly agreeable to them both, and they parted, mutually pleased with each other, repeatedly promising to see one another often.

Revel was now a constant visitor at Mrs. Greville's: Miss Greville's person and behaviour being particularly attractive in *his* opinion. She was, indeed, a very amiable girl, mild, sensibly modest; her face, though it was not regularly beautiful, was so expressive of her character, that it could not fail of giving pleasure to all who beheld it; and it had so powerful an effect upon Revel, that it made him think the sitting down contented with one woman capable of rendering his home agreeable, might possibly be better than the rambling after an hundred, unable to make him happy any where. In this age, indeed,

deed, many woman, by their *condescensions*, greatly lessen their influence over the men, there was neither an over-forwardness, nor an over-reserve in Emily Greville. She knew perfectly well how to keep up her own consequence without lowering that of her admirer. Such a woman was naturally formed to please a man who had seen and conversed with an infinite variety of women, without finding one so very agreeable in her person and her manners, so faultless in her conduct; as perfect as human creature can be. As these were his sentiments, it was very natural for him to suppose that he would frequently speak of her in very high terms and in the phrases she deserved, to Bonfoy, to whom he also gave hints that he thought his addresses to her might be acceptable.

These hints drew many sighs from Bonfoy, as it made him feel the almost
impossibility

impossibility of his success, in the same
 manner with Miss West. On asking
 Revel, if he had ever made enquiries
 after *that* lady, he answered—"I have
 "—I have also made both Mrs. Gre-
 "ville and her daughter sensible of the
 "danger you have been in from the
 "blow you received in taking your
 "friend's part last night at the play-
 "house, and they discover much con-
 "cern : with regard to Miss West, they
 "only told me, in general, that she was
 "very well. However, Mr. West and
 "his family, are, I know, in London :
 "and Mrs. Malpas is with them—Mr.
 "Burton and Miss Ash are their con-
 "stant visitors : it is imagined that
 "there will be a match between the two
 "latter : an alliance which Mr. West
 "encourages, as it will prevent his son
 "from gratifying an inclination which
 "cannot be agreeable to him upon
 "many accounts. Mr. West thinks
 "that

“ that his son may expect a lady of a
“ better family, and with a larger for-
“ tune ; and that he would not care
“ who was in possession of Miss Ash’s
“ person, provided *he had* possession of
“ her heart.”

Bonfoy, though of a very different way of thinking from young West, and had the most humane disposition imaginable, could not hear of these intended marriages without earnestly wishing that he could increase the number of them with Miss West ; but as there were no hopes of such an event for him, his spirits were much depressed, and his dejection retarded his recovery. A kind of nervous fever hung about him : it did not confine him to his chamber, but prevented his going abroad.

Singleton, though not at all of a lively temper, and at this time far from
being

being in a cheerful humour, exerted himself to entertain and amuse his young friend, both by conversation, and reading to him.

In these humane employments he was engaged, one day, when Mr. Dormer paid him a visit.

Mr. Dormer finding only Bonfoy with Singleton, whose placid countenance and mild demeanor had greatly pleased him, at the first sight of him, soon began to give a vent to his aversion to the faithless sex, who had ruined his peace for ever.

Singleton most cordially joined with Dormer in his invectives, and by so doing afforded him the greatest satisfaction—"You then, sir, exclaimed he, "have also been deceived by the woman "on whom your soul doated?"

"I have

"I *have*, replied he, with great
"emotion—I have suffered, it is incre-
"dible how much."

|"How I sympathize with you! said
"Dormer—how cruelly mortifying is
"it to be refused by the woman we
"love?"

"Refused?—cried Singleton, eagerly
"—refused?—Starting from his chair,
"while he clapped his hand to his fore-
"head, and appeared in a violent agony
"—refused?—*I was not* refused—Oh!
"my God!—there!—there!—But I
"will not say any thing—I cannot talk
"of it—I cannot think of it—reflec-
"tions distract my brain."

"Well—replied Dormer, calmly—
"people feel their sorrows in a different
"manner—mine, I confess, incline me
"to be communicative;—they force
"me

“me to speak, and to complain of the
 “cruel refusal of my Lætitia, though
 “so many years are past, since I saw
 “her lovely face.”

At the articulation of the word
 Lætitia, Singleton, who after having
 violently rubbed his forehead, had just
 begun to sit silent, lifting up his eyes,
 which were red, and looked ready to
 start out of their sockets, hastily said,
 “You was also beloved by a Lætitia,
 “then?—How much reason have I
 “to execrate that name!—How it re-
 “vives ideas never to be forgotten!”

Here Singleton relapsed into his
 former *reverie*.

Bonfoy, leaning forward in a listening
 attitude, was all attention to them
 both.

“Yes,

“ Yes, replied Dormer—yes—Lætitia
“ Holdford was the name of the dear
“ creature whom I adored—but I was
“ never so happy as to find myself be-
“ loved by her.”

Here Singleton, rising in the most
violent agitation, exclaimed, “ Lætitia
“ Holdford ?”

Bonfoy eagerly repeated the same
name; then appearing sorry for having
mentioned it, hung down his head and
was silent.

“ Yes—Lætitia Holdford—replied
“ Dormer—for so she called herself,
“ and I have all the reason in the world
“ to believe *that* was her real name.—
“ But did you know her, sir ?” added
he, with a particular earnestness in his
voice and manner.

“ I knew

“ I knew one of that name, replied he,
“ which almost prevented him from
“ speaking—however, since we are some
“ how unaccountably got upon this sub-
“ ject, let me beseech you to go on—
“ I will patiently listen—I will endea-
“ vour to be calm—yet why should I
“ be otherwise than composed?—What
“ is it to me?”

Here he was still again, though to all appearance with great difficulty, struggling with passions that seemed almost ready to choak him;—he denied them vent, however, and forced them down.

“ Why then, (continued Dormer,
“ who seemed as eager to relate the
“ cause of his uneasiness, as Singleton
“ could be to hear it)—about sixteen
“ years ago, I had a violent fever—I
“ was

“ was delirious ; upon my recovery I
 “ was ordered by my physicians to sleep
 “ in the air : as my business, at that
 “ time, would not permit me to go far
 “ from London, I took lodgings at
 “ Kentish Town, on account of its
 “ rural situation and the salubrity of
 “ the air ; but it would have been
 “ better for me if I had remained in
 “ town ; even in the midst of the city,
 “ during the time of a plague, I could
 “ not have suffered so much as I did, by
 “ lodging in the house with one of the
 “ most desirable creatures I ever met
 “ with, who had taken an apartment in
 “ the same house for herself and her
 “ son, a child about six years old. I
 “ saw her first by accident, and thought
 “ I had never beheld so pleasing a
 “ figure—I was struck, I was charmed
 “ at first sight ; but that you may not
 “ call me too extravagant, I will endeavour
 “ to give you a description of her
 “ person

" person. Notwithstanding the number
 " of years past since I saw her, her
 " resemblance is still fresh in my me-
 " mory. She was neither tall or short,
 " there was an exact symmetry in her
 " form, and she had, I think, the
 " finest neck and bosom in the uni-
 " verse."

Singleton, reaching forward in his
 chair, seemed to devour every syllable
 uttered by Dormer.

" Her complexion, continued he,
 " and, indeed, the whole texture of
 " her skin was remarkably delicate; her
 " hair was of a bright chesnut, and it
 " shaded her face in the most becoming
 " manner; her eyes were dark, but
 " beamed so many beauties that there is
 " no doing justice to them; her nose
 " was strait; her lips were of a bright
 " vermilion

“vermillion, which enclosed an even
 “set of pearly teeth, while a bewitching
 “dimple in her chin, a beauty but little
 “found in many faces, agreeably dis-
 “tinguished hers, and compleated the
 “whole.”

Here Singleton changed colour, and
 Bonfoy's eyes were upon the stretch, as
 if he wished to see confirmed before him
 what he had just then heard.

Dormer went on—“This, gentle-
 “men, was the person of Mrs. Hold-
 “ford; but though you will both, I
 “I believe, allow it was a lovely one,
 “the beauties of her mind and the
 “charms of her conversation were far
 “superior to all her personal attractions.
 “As I discovered all these various beau-
 “ties, I determined to get them, if
 “possible, into my own possession, and
 “foolishly flattered myself that because

“ *she* had only a little to live upon, and
 “ I a great deal, she could not refuse
 “ me ;—I therefore made a declaration
 “ of my love, and offered her my hand
 “ and fortune. To my utter confusion
 “ she refused me, absolutely rejected
 “ me, nor could all that I was able to
 “ say to move her, change her cruel
 “ purpose—it had not the least effect
 “ upon her. For some months I fol-
 “ lowed her, and strove, by every art I
 “ was master of, to make an alteration in
 “ my favour—but in vain ;—far from
 “ giving me hopes of success, she became
 “ more cool and indifferent to me, I
 “ thought, than ever. By this cutting
 “ behaviour of hers, I was so additionally
 “ disappointed and distressed, that the
 “ intense agonies of my mind, in con-
 “ sequence of it, rapidly brought on a
 “ fever—a distemper much more violent
 “ than that from which I had just re-
 “ covered when I first saw her ; and
 “ nothing

“ nothing could be done to afford me re-
 “ lief, till she, hearing of my situation,
 “ kindly came to visit me. She not
 “ only came to see me, but offered me
 “ all the assistance in her power, and
 “ was the tenderest of nurses to me,
 “ till she saw I was out of danger. Upon
 “ her taking leave of me a second time,
 “ I told her again, that myself and all
 “ I had in the world were at *her* service,
 “ adding, that if she wished to preserve
 “ my life, she must consent to my spend-
 “ ing it with *her*.—She hesitated.—
 “ With impatience I repeated my pro-
 “ testations of everlasting love, and
 “ urged her, if she had the least desire
 “ to save me, to say she would be mine.
 “ After a second pause, she blushing-
 “ ly agreed to my request, and threw me
 “ into an inexpressible extacy. At first
 “ I could hardly compose myself to
 “ think of any thing but the pres nt
 “ transporting moment; by degrees,
 “ however,

“ however, she soothed my mind to a
 “ more peaceable enjoyment of the
 “ raptures I felt at that time, and a
 “ more quiet expectation to that which
 “ was in reserve for me. I recovered
 “ my health, and began to prepare for
 “ the happy hour which was to ensure
 “ her mine for ever.—One morning
 “ she came to me, and, after a very
 “ short introduction, told me, that hav-
 “ ing well considered the consequences
 “ which must necessarily arise from the
 “ continuance of our attachment, she
 “ had determined to break it off im-
 “ mediately, and I could not by all
 “ the arguments in my power to adopt,
 “ turn her from her purpose.—

“ You may easily conceive, added
 “ Mr. Dormer,—you may much more
 “ easily imagine than I can describe
 “ what an effect this revolution had
 “ upon me, doating as I was, and be-
 “ lieving myself to be near the posses-
 “ sion

" sion of all that I held dear upon earth.
 " I received the cruel determination,
 " indeed with no kind of temperance—
 " I behaved as I felt—like a distracted
 " creature; the more I reflected upon
 " my Lætitia's cruelty, and the severity
 " of my disappointment, the more ex-
 " travagant I became. I was ablo-
 " lutely frantic—I accused her of a
 " breach of promise—I told her—in
 " hopes of moving her to recall her
 " words—that she was an arrant jilt,
 " and that nothing could be more in-
 " famous than the behaviour by which
 " she had reduced me from happiness
 " to misery."—She replied, with looks
 and accents which I shall never forget.
 —" Yes, I am infamous—I know
 " it but too well; and for that very
 " reason, I will never injure any man
 " by suffering him to marry so un-
 " deserving a creature."—Here she
 stopped and hung her head. Still more

K 3
alarmed,

alarmed, still more distressed by this
behaviour, I called upon her loudly
to explain what she meant: "I will
"explain my meaning, answered she,
"in a few words.—My father was
"a clergyman in the West of England,
"where he resided some years upon
"a very small living before I was born.
"He gave me the best education in
"his power; to *him*, indeed, I am in-
"debted for all the little knowledge
"I have; and had I followed the pre-
"cepts which he endeavoured to instil
"into my mind, I should not have
"been the thing I am. He died too
"soon for my peace, and left me to
"the care of my mother, with the small
"sum which he had saved out of his
"income, and which was barely a sub-
"sistence for us both. In such a situa-
"tion, I thought of making an offer
"of myself to be a companion, or up-
"per

“ per servant, to some lady of charac-
 “ ter; and soon afterwards became ac-
 “ quainted with a gentleman who had
 “ a very large estate, which lay a few
 “ short miles from the village where
 “ my mother had taken an apartment;
 “ she died in a few months afterwards,
 “ and left me to myself, and to the
 “ solicitations of my lover, who had,
 “ indeed, behaved to me in a very
 “ generous manner, I thought, by mak-
 “ ing the most honourable proposals
 “ to me: offers so far beyond my ex-
 “ pectations, that I thought I could
 “ never be too grateful to him for
 “ such a distinction. To that grati-
 “ tude (continued the weeping fair
 “ one) I owe all my present unhappi-
 “ ness. I had no father, no mother,
 “ no other relation to guard me from
 “ my impending ruin, to check me
 “ when I seemed inclined to go be-
 “ yond the bounds which discretion

“prescribed. Thus left alone with-
 “out a single friend to warn me of
 “my danger; with a dear, tender be-
 “loved man, for whom, I thought, I
 “could not do too much; I fell a sa-
 “crifice to *him who should have been*
 “my preserver; yet who could not
 “with honour, with safety, give his
 “name and fortune to a woman who
 “had convinced him that she was not
 “capable of taking care of what ought
 “to be dearer to her than any thing
 “in life; her virtue and her reputa-
 “tion. My lover told me so when
 “I reminded him of his promise; he
 “told me that he was grieved to death
 “at what was past; adding, that tho’
 “he must for ever blame himself for
 “soliciting me to yield to his wishes,
 “that he never could think of marry-
 “ing a woman in whom he could place
 “no confidence.”—“With these words
 “—these mortifying words—he left
 “me

“me abruptly: he only staid to say,
“that by not being able to resist his
“solicitations, I had undone both him
“and myself.”

Here Dormer paused a moment, being too much affected to proceed: in fact, his attention was also called off to Singleton, who groaned, and even sobbed aloud. Raising his eyes at last, all red with weeping, he just waved his hand for Dormer to go on—He proceeded in the following manner:

“When my lover had left me—
“(continued Mrs. Holdford) my mind
“was in a state of the utmost confusion, torn to pieces by contending
“passions—I doated on my lover; I
“adored him as much as I despised
“myself; yet I reproached him at the
“same time, for having so warmly
“solicited for what he could not but

“ see I was incapable of refusing, tho’
 “ my compliance would plunge me
 “ into perdition.—In consequence of
 “ more cool recollection, however, I
 “ could not blame him for rejecting
 “ me, when I had rendered myself so
 “ unworthy of his esteem.—No man,
 “ certainly, can oblige a woman to
 “ injure herself if she is not as willing
 “ as *he* is; and is it natural for a man
 “ to believe that a woman cannot be
 “ trusted by *him* when she has proved
 “ her inability to defend her own ho-
 “ nour?—With these sentiments, then,
 “ could I think of desiring any farther
 “ connections with the man who had
 “ lost his regard for me, though his
 “ affections, perhaps, were not imme-
 “ diately alienated?—I determined,
 “ therefore, to leave the place of my
 “ birth, as it only reminded me of
 “ shame, and to fly, for ever, from a
 “ man whom I had loved but *too well*;
 “ whom

"whom I found I should, notwith-
 "standing the impropriety of *his* con-
 "duct and my own, love to the last
 "moment of my life. — Accordingly
 "I removed to London as privately
 "as I could. There I soon found
 "that my indiscretion was known, and
 "it was attended with still more dis-
 "agreeable consequences. In short, sir,
 "at the end of nine months, I was de-
 "livered of the son of whom you have
 "taken so much notice. Soon after
 "his birth I came to this place for the
 "sake of the air and retirement. You
 "know the rest of my history, (con-
 "tinued she) and now let me intreat
 "you to consider a moment, whether
 "I am a proper woman for *your* wife.
 "I perceive, and with the greatest plea-
 "sure, that you have a sincere affec-
 "tion for me: an esteem which I can-
 "not return, because I cannot *love* a
 "second time. To cure you, there-
 "fore,

"fore, of an inclination which gives
 "you, I am very sensible, no small
 "uneasiness, I have exposed myself;
 "hoping you will, in consequence of
 "my narrative so unfavourable to me
 "—relinquish me for ever; as no man
 "in his senses can love the woman
 "whom he does not esteem."

"Oh! it is most true—it is most
 "true, (exclaimed Singleton, writhing
 "himself about in his chair in an ago-
 "ny) No man can with honour marry
 "the woman whom he has seduced—
 "and yet—but I cannot enter upon
 "the subject—I am all ear—I cannot
 "talk—My brain is on fire—I am al-
 "most distracted."

"This case touches you then?" said
 Dormer.

"Touches

“ Touches me? replied Singleton,
“ warmly. — It comes too home—it
“ tortures me,”——then, after a mo-
mentary pause, during which he rolled
his eyes, clapped his forehead — he
started up, and cried —— “ Did you
“ marry her after all?”

“ No, replied Dormer; she never
“ would consent; she even withdrew
“ herself, secretly, from her lodgings,
“ and I never could hear of her again,
“ though I spared neither cost or pains
“ to find her out. All I have to deepen
“ the impression of her image upon my
“ memory is this little locket with her
“ hair, which I confess I stole from
“ her, as a precious relique from the
“ saint I adored; for surely (continued
“ he) notwithstanding her first, her only
“ failing, she was an incomparable wo-
“ man.”

Here

"fore, of an inclination which gives
 "you, I am very sensible, no small
 "uneasiness, I have exposed myself;
 "hoping you will, in consequence of
 "my narrative so unfavourable to me
 "—relinquish me for ever; as no man
 "in his senses can love the woman
 "whom he does not esteem."

"Oh! it is most true—it is most
 "true, (exclaimed Singleton, writhing
 "himself about in his chair in an ago-
 "ny) No man can with honour marry
 "the woman whom he has seduced—
 "and yet—but I cannot enter upon
 "the subject—I am all ear—I cannot
 "talk—My brain is on fire—I am al-
 "most distracted."

"This case touches you then?" said
 Dormer.

"Touches

“ Touches me? replied Singleton,
 “ warmly. — It comes too home—it
 “ tortures me,”——then, after a mo-
 mentary pause, during which he rolled
 his eyes, clapped his forehead — he
 started up, and cried —— “ Did you
 “ marry her after all?”

“ No, replied Dormer; she never
 “ would consent; she even withdrew
 “ herself, secretly, from her lodgings,
 “ and I never could hear of her again,
 “ though I spared neither cost or pains
 “ to find her out. All I have to deepen
 “ the impression of her image upon my
 “ memory is this little locket with her
 “ hair, which I confess I stole from
 “ her, as a precious relique from the
 “ saint I adored; for surely (continued
 “ he) notwithstanding her first, her only
 “ failing, she was an incomparable wo-
 “ man.”

Here

Here he produced a little ivory box from his pocket, from which he took the above-mentioned locket, and held it out to Singleton.

Bonfoy, who had for some time been all attention, hastily catching at it, exclaimed—"This locket was my dearest mother's."

"*Your mother's?*" cried Singleton starting up, with a thousand different passions in his face—"Your mother's?" "If so—you are my son—Oh! my boy!" "—my boy!—Yes—you are the child of my dearest, my best Lætitia.—"

Words are too weak to describe the scene which followed this entirely unexpected discovery.—The father and son, after having, for some time, looked at each other with the eyes of astonishment and affection—rushed into each other's

other's arms, with equal rapidity, and appeared transported at nature's having given a sanction to the effusions of their mutual sensibility.

Dormer stood beholding them with amazement, and declared that he should no longer execrate women; adding, that though he had suffered so much from the refusal of Mrs. Holdford, had it not been for her noble resolution, her son might never have known his father—"and I might never (continued he) "have shared the pleasure of this first "interview: a felicity far exceeding all "the joys which it is in the power of "woman to bestow."

Just as he had spoken these words, Revel and Hales entered the room. The former having overheard the few last words, cried out—"That's false, I am "sure; there is no joy below equal to "the

“ the possession of a fine woman : the
 “ loveliest work of the creation ; but, I
 “ suppose these were the sentiments of
 “ my friend Singleton, though they pro-
 “ ceeded from the lips of Mr. Dormer.”

“ No (replied Singleton)—(just re-
 “ covering from the agitations into
 “ which he had been thrown) no—I
 “ have done railing against a sex that
 “ could not, without our concurrence,
 “ be culpable, though they are not, for
 “ that reason merely, altogether inex-
 “ cusable, as they have it in their power
 “ to be angelic, by resisting our most
 “ violent solicitations to render them-
 “ selves contemptible in the eyes of the
 “ world, and in their own. Had my
 “ Lætitia been capable of refusing com-
 “ pliance with *my* pressing intreaties, she
 “ might now have been alive, and I
 “ might have, with rapture inexpressi-
 “ ble,

“ ble, acknowled her the mother of my
“ son—my Charles—straining Bonfoy to
“ his bosom—yet I cannot forgive my-
“ self for not persisting in trying to find
“ out the poor, dear, unhappy object of
“ my passion, in order to make her all
“ the reparation in my power.”

“ You *would have* married her then?
“ (cried Dormer hastily, not regarding
“ either Revel or Hales)—if you *could*
“ *have* married her?”

“ Oh no! (replied Singleton) there
“ are a thousand reasons why a man
“ ought never to marry a woman after
“ she has parted with her virtue:—in
“ the first place, he cannot, as Lætitia
“ justly informed you, repose any con-
“ fidence in her—in the second, were
“ she to be so rewarded, how would
“ women be encouraged to give way to
“ their inclinations, let them be ever so
“ vicious

"vicious or depraved; but though a
 "man is not to be defended for mar-
 "rying his mistress, however she may
 "atone for her past dissolute conduct,
 "what must *be* be who abandons his
 "child to distress, nay beggary.—Had
 "you not found a more than father, my
 "son (continued he) addressing himself
 "to Bonfoy, in your generous friend,
 "who left you his name as well as
 "fortune, as if he had foreseen you were
 "as much in want of me as well"—

Here Singleton perceiving the two
 gentlemen who came in last look full of
 astonishment, presented Bonfoy to them
 as his new acknowledged son:—seeing also
 that their wonder did not seem to abate,
 informed them of what has been re-
 lated.

Revel most cordially congratulated
 Bonfoy on so agreeable an event, and
 appeared

appeared to be particularly pleased to find that he had learned the cause of Singleton's strange behaviour: a conduct which he himself then endeavoured to excuse, by declaring that the affection he had for the mother of his friend, would never let him enjoy a moment, after she had yielded; adding, that though he could never bring himself to marry her, he could never be happy without her, and censuring her, fondly as he loved her, for first tempting him to persuade her to consent, and then complying with his wishes; thinking, that if he had been acquainted with a woman of a colder constitution, he might have been happy, though he was, from that time, strongly induced to believe all women loose, because she whom he had supposed to be as chaste as vestal, had fallen—"All this (continued he) with the uncertainty I was in about my Lætitia's unhappy child, greatly

“greatly disturbed me—I thought it
 “was hard *he* should suffer for the fail-
 “ings of his parents—I have never been
 “easy, from that time on *his* account,
 “as well as his mother’s, nor have I
 “ever ceased to condemn myself for
 “having abandoned a helpless infant to
 “want and misery—How transporting
 “then, is it, concluded he, to know
 “that I have such a son: and that he
 “found a friend who was a parent to
 “him when he stood in need of one.”

Bonfoy looked delighted at the satisfaction which Singleton expressed on *his* account, and said, that he could produce still more authentic proofs of his being the son of Mrs. Holdford, as he had a great number of her letters, of which the hand-writing was, no doubt, well known to his father—Accordingly, stepping up to his bureau, he brought them down.

Singleton

Singleton and Dormer (who had also corresponded with Lætitia) immediately recognized Mrs. Holdford's hand. The former dropped a tear in silent sorrow, while he ran over the contents of some of the letters. As soon as he recovered himself, he desired a lawyer might be sent for immediately, that he might make a will in favour of his son, lest some accident should prevent his design.

When Bonfoy heard this request, he very modestly intreated his father would not do any thing to the prejudice of Mrs. Grace.

“ Well thought of, my dear Bonfoy,
 “ (said Revel) who could no longer keep
 “ in his cheerfulness, for she will be suf-
 “ ficiently unhappy in finding herself de-
 “ prived of a lover.”

Hales

114 The LOCKET.

Hales joined the laugh, saying, that he was afraid no *money* would make her amends for the loss of the *man*, if the lady was really seriously in love.

“No jesting upon *our aunt*,” (cried Revel) seeing Bonfoy look grave, as if he thought that Singleton might be offended: but that gentleman had received so great an ease to his mind from the late discovery, that all his former good humour returned, and he was no longer the shy, reserved, woman-hater; he became, on the contrary, quite open and communicative, and upon Dormer’s presenting the locket to him, telling him that he thought he had the best right to it, he gave it to Bonfoy—“As it is my own hair, Charles (said he) you may present it to your wife, if you please, when you get one.”

Bonfoy

Bonfoy changed colour, and endeavoured to suppress a rising sigh. Revel burst into a loud laugh—"I hope (said he) that Mr. Dormer and every other inamorato would not, for the future, be so desirous of purloining trinkets from their mistresses, as the *hair* of any person, even that of a rival, might be of the same efficacy as the tresses of the dear creature herself."

In these sentiments he was joined by Hales.

Bonfoy, seeing Dormer look rather disconcerted at their raillery, said—" 'Tis a pity that the most pleasing of all passions lays people so frequently open to ridicule."

"It is because they will make themselves ridiculous, (replied Hales)
" would

“ would they love like rational creatures, they might be both happy and respectable.”

“ Respectable!—cried Revel, with an arch laugh—what a formal epithet is *that*!—how cold!—how opposite to all the fire of sentiment and ardour of passion!”

“ Well, answered Hales, *you* might have been silent, however, for you will be certainly found guilty of filching some amorous toy or other from your Helen, though it were only an old slipper to nuzzle in your bosom.”

A loud laugh from all parties now convinced every individual that they were perfectly in humour with each other, and in peace with all mankind. To keep them so, Singleton's lawyer entered

entered the room, and told him, that he brought him agreeable news—"Mrs. Malpas's attorney, added he, has just been with me, to let me know that she has put a stop to her prosecution, at the desire of Mr. West, who had persuaded her to compromise matters."

Singleton was not, at first, willing to listen to any compositions, as he found himself highly injured, and Bonfoy was warmly on his side of the question; but the lawyer satisfied them by saying, that Mrs. Malpas, certain of losing her cause, and ashamed of what she had done, would make any submission Mr. Singleton and his friends should think proper, provided every thing about the affair was to be dropped.

This was agreed to by Singleton, who settled all his fortune (a couple of thousands on Mrs. Grace, and a few other legacies excepted) to Bonfoy.

Bonfoy, after having made the most grateful acknowledgements to his father, added—"I wish, sir, to be under
 " still greater obligations to you, by receiving your permission to use my
 " endeavours to gain Mr. West's consent to address his daughter.

This Singleton very readily granted, and informed him also that when he had so done, he must return to the *ball*; telling his friends then present, at the same time, that their company would give him additional pleasure. They also, with the greatest alacrity, consented

sent to attend him in three or four days at farthest.

During that time Bonfoy easily prevailed on Mr. West, who had heard of his being made heir to a large fortune, to give him leave to visit his daughter as a lover, and he was received by Miss West with a glow of satisfaction. She then explained the cool reception he had met with on calling upon them when he left the cottage, informing him that it was entirely occasioned by the prejudices with which Mrs. Malpas had filled the minds of her father and mother against him.—“ But they soon caught her out, “ continued she—they found her to “ have a very indifferent character.”

Bonfoy, now having nothing to apprehend from the malice of Mrs. Malpas, soon found himself upon a tolera-

ble footing with the whole West's family.

Revel, in the mean time, could not succeed so well with Miss Greville.— She had heard of his connection with Mrs. Malpas, and though she readily admitted what he said with regard to a woman's making the first advances, she declared that she would never marry a man who had encouraged such addresses.

Revel replied, rather in a pet, "I am afraid, Madam, if that is the case, you will never marry at all, as there is hardly a man living who has not had such an affair upon his hands at one time or other."

The answer was, "If men are so licentious, then it is best to have
"no

“no connections with them”——She then made her curtsy and retired; however, before she left the room, he told her, “that if such were her sentiments, she must lead *Apes* her own way.”——“’Tis better to *lead* than to be *led*, replied she, at any time.” With these words she walked away.

Revel now, for the first time in his life, began to wish that he had not been so free of his favours among the looser part of the fair sex, as he found that there were many valuable women to be met with, not ashamed to own they despised him for his licentiousness. —He was inexpressibly chagrined: he gnawed his nails with vexation, at seeing every man of his acquaintance in a fair way to succeed with his favourite mistress.

Mrs. Monson, having just consented to accept of Mr. Hales's hand, agreed to go down into Cheshire with Mr. West and his family. Singleton, Bonfoy, and Dormer, set out at the same time, at their request, for the *ball*.

Revel would not stay behind, rejected as he was by Miss Greville, who attended her aunt and mother upon the same party. They were all invited by Singleton to spend the first evening of their arrival in Cheshire, at *his* house.

When they arrived there, Mrs. Grace met them in a great flutter of spirits. She declared that she was glad to see so much good company; but added, that she was afraid she had something to relate to her brother, which would greatly disconcert him.

“What

“What is that, sister; said he with
“more chearfulness than he had spoken
“to her for some years.”

“I don’t well know how to tell you;
“replied she, before so many strange
“visitors.”

“Oh! said he, I have no secrets
“but what they all know.”

“Why then, answered she, our last
“new house-maid, a pert hussy, though
“she was paralytic from the heart down-
“wards before she came here—(or I
“should never have hired her) has had
“the assurance to declare that she would
“swear a child to you as soon as you
“returned from London.”

A loud laugh from the company,
and a still louder from Singleton, quite
confounded Mrs. Grace.

“Why

“Why brother, said she, you are
“amazingly altered sure; is there any
“jest in getting bastards?

“Certainly, madam, replied Hales;
“a wonderful deal of fun.”

“The best jest, my dear sister, said
“Singleton, is, that I have got only one
“—and here he is—I present him to
“you as *my son and heir*; as *your* nephew
“—he has already made himself agree-
“able to you; therefore, you cannot
“refuse him your affection; especially,
“when you are informed that he has
“desired his good aunt may be re-
“membered handsomely in my *will*.”

Here Mrs. Grace, who did not perfectly understand her brother, nor like to hear of his having an heir, replied—
“I cannot tell what you mean; but if
“you really have a bastard after all,
“I wonder

“ I wonder how you came to be so
“ ridiculous : I think it would be much
“ more becoming in you to be ashamed
“ of such scandalous doings, than to
“ brag of your bastards ; as if nobody
“ ever had any before—as if *you* was
“ the only man for them.”

A general laugh was produced by
this speech : when it subsided, Single-
ton said, with a very serious tone,
“ I thought, sister, that you had clearly
“ understood me. No man who has
“ a proper sense of things, will be
“ ashamed of endeavouring to repair
“ a crime of which he has been guilty.
“ I have been tempted more, possibly,
“ than any man ever was, to take ad-
“ vantage of the tenderness of a wo-
“ man, whom I before intended to
“ make my wife, and who was ren-
“ dered unhappy for many years, in
con-

“ consequence of my refusing to marry
 “ her; yet as I have now discovered
 “ the son I had by her—a son deserv-
 “ ing of my utmost affection and es-
 “ teem; no person, I think, ought to
 “ be in the least offended with me for
 “ endeavouring to atone for the injuries
 “ which *she* received by acknowledg-
 “ ing and providing for *him*. As I
 “ have no wife or any children to take
 “ care of, I must surely be approved
 “ by every person of a liberal turn of
 “ mind: such persons will, I hope,
 “ make extenuating allowances for my
 “ past indiscretions, as no man ever
 “ more sincerely repented of his follies,
 “ than I have of mine.”

This speech had all the effect in-
 tended and wished for, upon Mrs. Grace
 and the rest of the company. She con-
 sented to receive Bonfoy as her nephew,
 and

and not being of a despairing constitution, consoled herself with reflecting, that had he *not* been related to her, he would have been rather too young for her, and that Mr. Dormer, to whom she immediately turned her eyes, might be a proper man. This last consideration, however, she kept to herself for that time, and welcomed the discovery of her nephew, and the arrival of her brother, with equal cordiality, with all the chearfulness imaginable. The whole company sat down to supper in the highest good humour; most of them were very nearly arrived at the consummation of their wishes, and the others endeavoured to enjoy the felicity of their friends; at least, till some measures could be taken to secure their own. Every man present resolved to avail himself of Singleton's past conduct, thinking it both ungenerous and criminal

criminal to triumph over the weakness of a woman; and it was every female's opinion that *she* could not reasonably expect a man to place an unlimited confidence in her, after having indiscreetly convinced him that she was incapable of preserving her honour from violation.

F I N I S.